

SIX YEARS IN A GEORGIA PRISON.

NARRATIVE

OF

LEWIS W. PAINE,

WHO SUFFERED IMPRISONMENT SIX YEARS IN GEORGIA, FOR THE CRIME
OF AIDING THE ESCAPE OF A FELLOW-MAN FROM THAT STATE,
AFTER HE HAD FLED FROM SLAVERY.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

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PREFACE.

THE reader will find in the following pages a correct statement of facts, and nothing else. I have nothing extenuated, nor set down aught in malice; but truth must be told, for it is mighty, and must prevail. Let justice be done, if the heavens fall. No creed or sect is responsible for what I profess; no community or party for what I write. I alone am accountable for the contents of these pages; and if any take exceptions to what I have said, they must quarrel with Truth and Justice.

L. W. P.

NARRATIVE.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND EARLY HISTORY.

I WAS born in the town of Smithfield, Providence County, Rhode Island, on the 11th day of January, 1819. On my father's side I am the fifth generation from one of three brothers, who came from England, and settled, I think, in the town where I was born. Nothing unusual occurred until the epoch which it is the purpose of this narrative to relate; though I now think I was unconsciously receiving the discipline which was to strengthen and prepare me for the great ordeäl. Having reached the proper age, I was kept at school most of the time, until I was ten years old.

Being blessed with a retentive memory, I soon learned to read and spell with ease. I was generally found at the head of my spelling class, and was always pronounced a good reader; but, notwithstanding this, I was seldom successful in bearing off the prize. I

was sure to miss a word, on Saturday, and be turned down just before the distribution of rewards. I remember once, of standing at the head, perfectly prepared to spell every word, and I felt sure of my primer that time; but my Evil Genius was holding his wand over me. I missed the word *mislead*, and my brother, who was just six years older to a day, spelled it, and I lost the prize. I remember of gaining only one prize in my whole life. Indeed I have always been the child of Disappointment. When the object of desire has been almost within my grasp, some unforeseen circumstance has dashed my hope to fragments! I have often realized the truth, and felt the power, of the following lines:

“Circumstance: that unspiritual god,
Or miscreator, makes or helps along
Our coming evils with a crutch-like rod,
Whose touch turns hope to dust,—the dust we all have trod.”

When at school, I found no one to compete with me in retentiveness of memory; and this power I still retain. Some theatrical men with whom I had been boarding a few months, were one day discussing the time required for learning the part of Macbeth. I remarked that I could do it in much less than the shortest time mentioned. One of them

said that I could not commit a certain fifteen lines in one hour. I asked him to point out the lines; then went to work, and in twenty minutes the task was done. But there was an exception to this power of memory. For some reason or other it would not act legitimately on grammar. I was put to this study when about seven years old, and of all hateful and detestable tasks I ever had imposed on me, this was the worst,—to be compelled to drudge through a chaotic mass of unmeaning words! The very name of Murray made my heart thump like a trip-hammer; and the bare sight of a grammar was to me a greater eye-sore than the stolen handkerchief to poor Othello. I could always see a reason why two and two are four; but the why and wherefore of those thirty or forty rules, with their thirty or forty exceptions, I could never understand. And when a clause occurred to which none of the rules or exceptions would apply, it was called an “adverbial phrase;” and this was the slough into which everything troublesome was finally precipitated. The result was, that I became disgusted with the study; and never had the heart to return to it till I was of age.

In the spring after I was ten years old, my

father bound me by a verbal contract to Horace Paine, a farmer, who lived in the town of Bellingham, Massachusetts. I stayed with him two years and a-half, and should, probably, have staid my time out, had it not been for a disagreement with his mother. When I had been with him about fourteen months, my father died. This caused me the most violent grief. For months there never came a night when my pillow was not wet with a shower of tears. The sense of loneliness, of weakness cast back on its own resources, was terrible indeed.

When I left Mr. Paine, I went to Cumberland, Rhode Island, and lived with my mother till she died, which happened in the February after I was fifteen. During that time I worked in the factory of Job Jencks & Sons. I always loved my mother very tenderly ; and if she had any preference among her children, I think I was the favorite. After I went to live with her, being the oldest son then at home, I became her chief dependence for help about the house. During the short recesses of meal hours, and after work at night, I drew the water and cut the wood ; and I always kindled her fire in the morning. My mother was a plain, industrious,

sensible, and good woman ; and she literally wore herself out for the comfort and welfare of her children. Her death affected me less than my father's had done,—why, I know not, unless it was because his had been the first blow. I can see no other reason for the extraordinary effect my father's death had on me, or for the difference in the two cases. I was thrown upon the world too young to know the value of a father's protection, or to appreciate fully the joy and blessing of a mother's presence and ministry.

I remained at the same place about seven months, when I had saved money enough to support me at school about five months, and then went to an academy at South Kingston. After my term had expired, I returned to the same place, and worked about six months more, and then went to Smithfield, and worked for Israel Saunders about one year, when I had earned money enough to support me for a while ; and I then went to school in New Hampshire about five months.

From there I went to my old place in Cumberland, and worked about five months, having, meanwhile, charge of the mule-room. From thence I went to Lowell, and having remained about two months, I went to Taunton,

Massachusetts. There I made the acquaintance of Jane M. Nelson, who subsequently became my wife. In rather less than a year, I went to Pawtucket; but not liking, staid only a few weeks, and then went to Bristol, Rhode Island, where I staid about fourteen months.

In the mean time, Miss Nelson's family removed to Lonsdale, Rhode Island, where, on the 31st day of March, 1839, we were married. After this I staid in Bristol about seven months, and then went to Fall River, where I lived till I went south. Here I worked for Theophilus Shove, and had charge of the mule-room.

I left all the different places, wherever I had worked, with a good understanding on both sides. I never had but one fight in my life, which was brought about by a man's insulting me with words which I returned, knowing that he had come out of his house for that very purpose, about something which did not concern him at all. He then undertook to beat me; but he got, instead, a very severe pounding in the public streets of Woonsocket. I was never in a difficulty of any kind in my life, until the one which I am about to describe. I can be persuaded a long way, but,

at the same time, it is extremely hard to drive me a single inch. I am ever touched at the sight of want and misery, for I have felt them both in my own person. Had I the world at my command, I would give the last penny, and become as poor as I am now, to banish want, suffering, bondage and misery,—could it possibly be done. I have always cheerfully cast in my mite,—though it has been *but a mite*—to relieve the distressed. I have given my last cent to enable a man to pay his taxes, so that he might vote. I have often given all I had to the helpless. Once, in Concord, New Hampshire, I gave a poor woman such a portion of what I had, that I was compelled to travel a good part of the way to Rhode Island, on foot, and live on one meal a day. This is nothing to boast of, and I do not wish it to be regarded in that light; I have simply done as I would wish to be done by, and that too much for my advantage, in a pecuniary point of view. Thus I was, as it were, constitutionally prepared to be the victim of an irresistible spirit of Love, acted upon by a cruel and unrighteous Law.

But those to whom I have been the occasion of the most benefit have given me fewest thanks. I once took a man in, who came to

my house, perfectly worn out by hard traveling. He staid till his feet got well ; I had his clothes washed, lending him my own during the time. He then turned around and berated me soundly to my neighbors, for the violence of my political principles, though he was a foreigner, and knew no more about politics than a horse about Congress. Another time I gave a poor widow liberty to send her children to my school free, and afterwards hired one of them to work for me by the week, and she quarreled with me because I would not pay her for a week when the boy could not work, on account of the rain. But as it takes all sorts of people to make a world, I suppose the above are only certain characteristics of a portion of its sojourners.

CHAPTER II.

GOING TO LIVE IN GEORGIA.

IN the summer of the year 1841, I made an agreement with D. R. Perry & Co., to go to Upson county, Georgia, for the purpose of starting and running some machinery in a factory. My first intention was to take my family ; but, on more deliberate consideration, I thought best to go out and stay awhile, and see how I liked the country ; so I departed alone, to that place which was to furnish a living grave for six years of my life.

About the 1st of September, I left Fall River for Georgia, and arriving there about the middle of October, immediately commenced work. Here all the modes of life, habits, and customs, were marked by a striking difference from those of the north. The people generally live in very poor houses, compared with such as are found here ; but in that sultry clime they are far more healthy than close and well-built houses would be. They are mostly built of logs, and are very open and airy. The southern diet is also more

conducive to health than ours, consisting mostly of smoked bacon, corn-bread, flour, rice and garden vegetables, with but very few condiments. I was in the very heart of slavery; and the slaves excited my curiosity more powerfully than all other things. They appeared kind, and ready to do any favor; and when they were thanked and spoken kindly to, in return, they felt themselves rewarded. As I had grown from youth to manhood with a full conviction that slavery was wrong, and as I had heard and read many stories, both for and against it, I was determined to see for myself, and investigate the subject fairly. I had ever been in the habit of speaking my mind freely, never shrinking from an avowal of my principles on any subject; and I could not feel myself a freeman unless I retained this right, unfringed, at all times, and in every place. I therefore used to converse on the subject of slavery with Mr. Perry's family, and others, when it came in opportunely. At one time, when the discussion became rather warm, Mr. Perry told me, that by only making my principles known, he could have his house surrounded by fifty men within half an hour. I told him that fifty times that number would not charge

my mind. No person can conceive, and I am incapable of expressing, the loathing disgust which that remark excited in me, to think that in this "glorious land of liberty," there was an institution which could not exist with freedom of speech! What an ironical commentary upon all our boasting is this single fact!

But Mr. Perry, personally, is a very kind man; and he always treated me and my family with respect and kindness; yet though his whole interest inclined him to uphold slavery, he was much too shrewd a calculator to purchase slaves for operative laborers in and about his factory.

I remained in Mr. Perry's employ about fourteen months, then sent for my family; and about this time, at the solicitation of the citizens, I engaged in school teaching. This employment gave me more leisure. I had every Saturday to myself; and as the Justice Courts are held on this day for the collection of all sums not over thirty dollars, by attending them I soon became acquainted with most of the people in the county. This afforded a good chance to see the practical operation of slavery. I have seen it in all its forms, and under every condition, from helpless infancy,

to helpless old age ; for I made inquiries in regard to every branch of the subject with which I was unacquainted.

I was once at a Mr. Sullivan's, when he himself introduced the subject. I told him that it was not for me to quarrel with the southern people about slavery, but I would be glad if they could see the justice and necessity of doing it away—and that I had ever thought it wrong, and unworthy of a free people. He said that the slaves were well provided for, and were better off than the factory hands of the north. This was insulting me over their backs ; and so I gave him to understand. I told him that I was one of the white slaves of the north, and as he had never seen one, he could behold in me a fair and average sample of the class. He attempted to apologize, though I assured him it was too late to qualify what he had said. I have often heard this remark made at the South by otherwise sensible men ; but the assertion is a very foolish one, if they would have us infer the master's right to hold a slave, from the fact of his being well fed. This rule would give a right to enslave all who are not so well off as the slaves, in respect to bodily comfort, under pretext of ameliorating their condition.

I was thrown into such close and frequent connection with the "peculiar institution" of the south, that I had abundant opportunity to observe its peculiar working principles.

"Man never is—but always to be—blest."

These words of Pope have a universal application. In whatever condition a human being may be placed, he hopes to better his situation, by some real or imaginary improvement of existing circumstances. To this end he is ever on the alert, to turn everything to his advantage that may assist in accomplishing his desires. None are more keenly alive to this object than they who are held in bondage. As a class none make fewer mistakes in their apprehension and appreciation of certain points of character; and therefore none find out their real friends sooner than they do. Their facilities for information of this kind are much greater than one would at first suppose. Those who are employed in and about the house, are always listening to the conversation of the whites; and as nothing is addressed to them, they naturally conclude that there is no intention to deceive them. Thus the ability to set an accurate value on what they hear, is determined by two causes, their

position, by which they are placed so far aside as to obtain correct views, and their condition, which continually sharpens their instinctive quickness of perception, into an acute appreciation of the facts, in any given case.

Whenever we are in a situation which demands the assistance of others, we seek friends in those who have shown sympathy for our misfortunes. Through the above means the slave whom I assisted found out my feelings and principles; and for the above reasons he applied to me for aid. In this way I became connected with an act which deprived me of my liberty, and cost me long, weary, bitter years of suffering and imprisonment.

CHAPTER III.

SAMSON THE SLAVE.

IN order that the reader may here be fully made acquainted with the person on whose account I fell into difficulty, I will give such a description of him as my knowledge may allow. Samson was born in Virginia, and lived there until he was about sixteen years of age; he was then sold to some traders, or speculators, who brought him to Georgia. He was torn from his native State, from home, kindred, and friends, and carried several hundred miles to a land of strangers. He laconically described himself as being at the above age, "an uncommonly valuable piece of property:" and the truth is evident to all who have ever seen him. He told me that he was well grown at sixteen, smart and active, in all ways. The trader was certain of making a great bargain out of him, and promised that if he would display all his valuable qualities to the best advantage, so as to sell for \$1,200 he would give him twenty-five dollars; and he says that he did so.

Physically he is one of the most powerful men I have ever seen. His strongly built and massive frame, broad shoulders, expansive chest, brawny hands and arms, and great muscular development, gave the power, and almost the proportions of a giant. He has a keen intelligent eye, and a countenance indicative of calculation, reflection, and cunning. When first brought from Virginia he was sold to the Walker family, in Upson county, Georgia, and had always remained with them. At this time he belonged to Allen Walker, and had become a good blacksmith. Such property as he is, however, is quite apt to "take wings and fly away."

I lived two miles from one of his master's plantations, and became acquainted with him sixteen months after I went to Georgia. He drew my attention more than others, from the fact that he was a notable slave. He was much inclined to listen to conversation while in the company of white persons; and as he had a retentive memory, but few things escaped his observation. I never had a word of conversation with him more than with others, until he came and desired me to assist him. He was conscious of the wrong he was compelled to suffer, and fully aware of the

natural rights with which, in being created MAN, he had been inalienably invested by the God of Nature. He was impatient of restraint; for he felt not only this, but the indignity of the bonds which coiled their chafing fetters around him. Who can conceive the anguish of such a mind, imprisoned, cramped, deformed, tortured as it was, yet fully aware of its right to freedom, development, growth, and the peaceful pursuit of its own happiness, according to its own sovereign will and pleasure. It is horrible to think of; and if there were but one such in the wide world, it were well worth the labors of all philanthropy, until that one should be redeemed, and reinstated in the proper possession of itself, and all that it may acquire, own, love, cherish, and enjoy! What then shall we say of the many such—of the thousands, and the millions, who are still more deplorably unconscious of their rights? This consciousness certainly increased Samson's misery; for as there is nothing so aggravating as the chafing of a raw wound, so with the mind, if it is always striking a saw through its wounded parts, the agony soon becomes unendurable: and yet even this, with all its torture, is better than utter insensibility, because

any consciousness of manhood is better than the brutish insensibility which does not feel, only because it cannot know. So the great argument of content in slavery that is commonly put forth by its defenders, by showing its dehumanizing power, furnishes the strongest possible evidence against it.

This disposition made Samson troublesome to his master in various ways. He felt himself too much of a man to be flogged; it was too degrading; the very instincts of manhood rose against it. He would frequently make his escape when he was to be whipped, which would excite his master's anger by being deprived of his services. At such times, Mr. Walker knew very well that it was of but little use to endeavor to catch him, for he could outwit both dogs and hunters. He was perfectly acquainted with the surrounding country, woods, creeks, rivers, and swamps. If closely pushed, he could cross a stream, or float himself down it upon a log, or in a skiff, or plunge into the depths of a miry swamp, where pursuit would be impossible. When other resources failed he would jump into a bed of juncos weeds, and rub the leaves all over his body; for this plant would put him in a condition like that of the Irish-

man's skunk, that was said to "stink so that no man on earth can smell him."

When he had staid out as long as he wished, he would send word to his master that he would "come in," provided he would not punish him. And the master sometimes broke his word, in spirit, by whipping him severely for a trifling fault; but Samson knew, as well as any other person, when he was dealt wrongfully by. There was one thing his master could never compel him to do, and that was to divulge a secret. He would never tell anything he had agreed not to tell, nor could the most forcible measures wring a secret from his breast. He and a fellow slave were once whipped very severely to make them acknowledge an act of theft; but they held out to the last. I never heard any complaint against Samson's morality. The only complaint was for possessing those qualities which are extolled by all men and nations: independence of character, and a desire to be free in word, thought, and action.

There was never a word dropped in his hearing, relative to freedom, and the free States, which he did not treasure up. It is astonishing what perfect indifference the slaves will assume while listening to such con-

versation as they know is not designed for them to hear. They will loiter and linger about, appearing to busy themselves with something, so as to catch every word that may be of help in carrying forward or executing any of their plans. By this means, Samson had acquired no small stock of information on various subjects. He knew quite too much to be valuable; or, more correctly speaking, they could not put confidence in his value, because he was liable to escape at any moment—if not altogether, yet, in such a way as to cause much inconvenience to his owner. His great bodily strength enabled him to do a large amount of work, while, at the same time, his mechanical ingenuity gave him the capacity for almost any kind of labor. He had a family, owned by his master's brother; and, during one of the periods of his "lying out," his wife was whipped for not betraying him. It might be, in this instance, that she was forsaking her father, and cleaving unto her husband. I do not say that such was the fact; but no one—not even Nathaniel and Allen Walker themselves—would have denied that they both had more children by their yellow mistresses, than by their white wives. And

the most horrible part of such guilt remains to be told.

I give the story as it was related to me by one who had been a near neighbor of Nathaniel Walker's for twenty years; and he says that it is as well known as any such fact can be known, by the voluntary assertion of one of the parties. Nathaniel Walker had a handsome yellow woman before his marriage, who bore him a fine daughter. This daughter was "raised," as they very appropriately in such cases term it at the south, as a house servant. At the age of about fifteen, this same daughter bore him another daughter! Here was a child whose father was her grandfather, and whose mother was her sister, and slavery was the monster tie of this monstrous relationship! Such is that institution which, even by religious people, has been defended as moral! It is a poor excuse to say that this is only the abuse of slavery. If a physician gives me a dose of medicine when I need it, it does not follow that I have a right to abuse my fellow-men by forcing it down their throats, whether they need it or not. So if there are persons so constituted as to hold slaves, and treat them as human beings, it does not follow that it is moral or right; and when once a

human being is chattelized he must follow the law of property, and that being the case, the good master cannot, under all circumstances, secure the comfort and welfare of his slaves, any more than he can in all cases control his money, or other goods, since they may be stolen, injured, or taken for debt; and in case of decease, there is great danger of sale, removal, and other changes, which the best master cannot either foresee, or prevent. Thus the condition of a piece of property is but a pitiful condition for a human being; and the protection of property, which is the strongest safeguard of the slave is, at the best, but a sorry and negative kind of protection, indeed. Where is the person in these United States, who would venture to say, at this time, that the slavetrade is either just or moral? Yet, one hundred years ago it was thought just as moral as slavery is, by many, at the present moment, considered. When will people call things by their right names?

CHAPTER IV.

ESCAPE OF SAMSON.

I HAD now taught school two years, making over three years that I had been in Georgia. My school closed about the first of December, 1844. I had made up my mind to engage in other business, and among my arrangements a trip to Alabama was contemplated. While I was preparing for the journey Samson applied to me for aid, in an attempt to gain his liberty.

His master had called him to account for neglecting his work. How far he was to blame in this particular instance I do not know; but I do know that the slave was, at times, much abused, and indeed always held to a rigorous restraint. He was too smart; he knew too much; his master was in continual fear of his escape, and therefore he tried to keep him curbed, and prevent his carrying out his wishes, by hard work, and hard usage. He would whip him for the most trifling offenses. He was a very severe man with such of his slaves as he did not like, and could

make their condition as uncomfortable as may be conceived. He well understood all the different modes of enhancing their misery; and he had long been in the practice of applying them to Samson with peculiar force. He would change him from one plantation to another; put him a little while here, and a little while there; sometimes near his wife and children, and sometimes away from them; now under this overseer, now under that. In short, he harassed him till he could endure it no longer, and he came to the conclusion to make a trial for his liberty; so at the time when his master undertook to whip him, which was in the latter part of 1844, he broke, and ran away. No one knew where he was, except a trusted few of his faithful companions. He kept hid during the day, only venturing out at night, in order to procure necessary supplies. He was out about three months before he came to me.

Those who are not acquainted with southern life will think this strange. But it not unfrequently happens that they stay out for years in that way. There are large tracts of land, covered with heavy timber, containing not only deep and almost impenetrable swamps, but caves, holes, shelving rocks and banks.

In these they secrete themselves during the day-time, venturing abroad only by night, in pursuit of food, and such articles as they may need, or to see those of their brother slaves whom they can trust. If they intend to "stay out" long, they prepare some way to cook, and by taking fowls, and once in a while a pig, they make out very well; for they can get as many potatoes, and as much corn, as they wish. But if they are not going to tarry long, they depend on such things as they can get, or others may give them. Still, they suffer much at times through fear of being caught; for when there seems to be much danger they will keep close, and go without eating for several days.

I was in the practice of going to a debating society about two miles from home, and as I returned from this late at night, about the middle of March, and was turning my horse into the lot, some one called to me. I asked who was there; and as soon as I spoke, Samson came up to me. I was surprised to see him; for no one, to my knowledge, had either seen or heard from him, since he made his escape. He told me his grievances, and asked me to assist him in gaining his liberty. I answered him that I was sorry for his mis-

fortunes, and would do anything which lay in my power; but that it was dangerous business,—that all advantages were for him, because I could gain nothing, and all dangers for me, because he could lose nothing. But he seemed to think there was no danger. He then tried the power of earnest pleading, and I shall never forget his noble and manly bearing, his impassioned gestures, and his eloquent speech, as he stood up there, demanding, as it were, *himself*, at my hands; and a true representation of him would be such a picture as no mere imagination ever conceived.

“I am tired of life,” he said. “I have lived only to be tormented! I want my freedom! I want to taste of liberty!—to know that I am a freeman—a MAN—so that I can hold up my head in the sight of the world, and not feel bowed down, and crushed—fit only to go with dogs! I will not be a beast, to be threatened for this, flogged for that; to be driven here and kicked there. I want to feel, to think, and to act like a man! Let me learn, and do, and act, and work for myself; have my own time, and my own money. I will not be a slave! A slave can’t be anybody, if he tries. There is nothing like liberty! My time, my money, myself; all I

get, and all I am,—mine, MINE FOREVER! What! a FREEMAN! a FREE MAN! You will bless the day you got all this for me! Will you do it? You can't refuse. I will have my liberty, or I will die!"

Who could refuse? Here was one asking aid to be a man! Here was an appeal, not only to my love of freedom, but to my sense of right, made and urged with more eloquence than that of Cicero and Demosthenes combined; for every word contained a volume of thought. His lacerated heart spoke in every word, while the scorched and burning soul gave a terrible power to the truth! His eloquence was wrung out from the tortures of a crushed but still conscious and noble humanity! Could his master have stood in my place?—no; could he have stood in his own place, but within sight and hearing, and have listened to that heart-gushing appeal, and the deep pathos of that speech, he would have melted! He could not have refused to let him go, and be a man! If he could have done so, he must have had the insensibility of a brute, or the wanton malice of a demon.

My nature was not proof against such pleading. It came home to all my professions and principles. I told him that I would

consider the matter, and if I saw a reasonable chance, I would do all I could for him; and in a week from that time he might come and I would let him know my mind.

I took the matter home to my own breast, asking myself what I should, in a like case, want another to do for me. I thought it would be but taking that which God gave to me and all other men, and which no man, nor any combination of men, can have power to touch—the natural freedom of limb and soul. This can only be done by despotic power, and the law that “might gives right.” I may be told that it is against the law. Then I say that no set of men have any right to make such laws for enslaving the blacks, more than the whites.

After La Fayette had assisted in procuring the freedom of this nation, and was endeavoring to liberate France, he was shut up in prison, because the Austrian Emperor said, “*est venu publier la liberté aux captifs.*”^{*} And the imperial despot was as well armed with laws as any of the despots of this country—laws which made it illegal and criminal to attempt to set his captive free. Yet, did not two Americans become heroes in this country

* He is come to publish liberty to the captives.

and villains in Austria, by risking their lives in order to liberate him from Olmutz! Would not the man have become almost a second Napoleon who could have delivered the emperor from the rock-hold of his island prison? Yet, the captors of La Fayette and Napoleon had as good a right to them as the master has to his slave—nay, better; for they acted somewhat on the ground of self-defense; but slavery is nothing but downright and sheer aggression, from the beginning to the end! It is absurd to say that those men, or any others similarly situated, were not slaves. They could have been made so at any time, by an act of government; for surely, if the right to enslave may be held by one government, it may also be held by another; and if it may be applied to one class of men, it may, with equal propriety, be applied to every other; or do Republicans arrogate to themselves the “bad eminence” of special privilege to chattelize their fellow-men, of being parties in that infamous relation which, while it degrades the slave, is a thousand-fold more degrading, dehumanizing, demonizing, to the enslaver? And would it not appear so; for do we not cry out against oppression every-

where else, whether in Poland, Greece, Ireland, or Hungary?

But I am wandering from the main subject. After having talked with Samson, I considered the chance of being able to carry the scheme into execution. As I was going to Alabama, I thought I could take him with me without exciting suspicion, provided we were not seen by any one who knew us; and there seemed to be a fair prospect of success. At the appointed time, he came to learn the result of my deliberations, and was informed of my decision.

I found him unshaken; his mind was unaltered; and he was prepared to risk all for liberty. He was full of joy and thankfulness, repeatedly saying, "I knew you would help me! This is the happiest moment of my life! I love my wife and children; and I love all here that are near and dear to me. These old hills, and farms, and friends, are all dear, and it is hard to give them up! Yes; my wife and children, it is hard to see them no more, but I hope I may yet see them free. Why should I wish to see them again under the curse of slavery? Liberty, freedom, is dearer than all; yes, dearer than life itself!"

This was on Thursday, the 27th day of

March, 1845. I told him to meet me on the following Monday night, in the next county; and it was agreed that I should start on that day, and travel till I came up with him.

On the 31st day of March I took leave of my family, and about the middle of the day set off on my perilous journey. It was about midnight when I overtook Samson, and we then started on our mission of liberty, not knowing what might be the result, yet hoping for the best. Before morning we were far enough not to be known by those who lived along the road; and I thought best to put a bold face on the matter, and travel right on, as though the slave belonged to me. The point of our destination was the Cooza River, in Alabama, and there my agency was to cease. He possessed ways and means to forward him from there to a free State. What those means were, or how he came into possession of them, it is neither proper nor necessary for me to state; but a cruel and relentless destiny subverted all our aims,—

“ For Disappointment marked us for its victims,
And Hope smiled only to deceive.”

CHAPTER V.

THE ARREST.

"I speak not of men's creeds,—they rest between
Man and his Maker; but of things allowed,

Averred and known, and daily, hourly seen,
The yoke that is upon us doubly bowed.

Yet, Freedom! yet, thy banner, torn but flying,
Streams like a thunder-storm against the wind.

Thy trumpet voice, though broken now and dying,
The loudest still the tempest leaves behind!

Thy tree hath lost its blossoms, and the rind,
Chopped by the axe, looks rough and little worth;

But the sap lasts; and still the seed we find
Sown deep, ev'n in the bosom of the North:

So shall a better spring less bitter fruits bring forth."

Childe Harold.

NOTHING of interest happened until the third morning, when I was roused by a clamor on the outside of the house, caused by two men who were tying Samson. As soon as they had effected this, they came into the house, with pistols and dirks, and commanded me to surrender. By this time, three more rode up on horseback, with shot guns. I saw that resistance was useless, as I was entirely unarmed. They shouted, and yelled like a

band of Indians over a captive. None of them were citizens of Upson County; but they had seen us pass, and the hope of reward had sharpened their suspicions. They therefore had pursued us for the sake of reward, and to gain popularity. One of them was a Methodist preacher, and another a church member; yet these men, regardless of their professions of brotherly love, and peace and good will to men, racked their brains for abusive epithets with which to insult me. They treated me in the most low, vulgar, and brutal manner during the whole of our backward journey. They took especial pains to stop at every crowd they saw, feigning business, or under pretense of making inquiries of some kind or other about a dead aunt or a live dog. One would have thought that they were secretaries of the interior; for they had to know and see the "interior" of all places, and all crowds. After I had got tired of this exhibition, I rode on whenever they stopped to show me up. They commanded me to stop. I told them I did not deal in humbug, and I thought they had better quit their show-trade. After this they took less pains to exhibit their prey.

In the course of the day they were quite

watchful of myself and Samson, in order to prevent our holding any conversation. They bound him at first; but as he could not walk fast enough, in that condition, they concluded to loosen his bonds. I was determined to let him take his own course. He walked on 'til he came to thick woods on both sides of the road; and while they were engaged in conversation he darted into the woods, and no one saw him. They sent about two miles for track dogs; but Samson knew what he was about, and what course to pursue. They searched round for about two hours, but all to no purpose; and then, in great chagrin, they remounted their horses, and we pursued our way.

But the last night we stopped on our journey they made up for all, and capped the climax. They took me to a private drinking house, collected a crowd, set out liquor; and all at once fell to drinking, shouting, boasting, talking of the gallows, threatening to hang me, and firing pistols. All this was done on the Sabbath, and under the especial benediction of the smooth-faced Methodist parson, and at least one church member.

At length the old man of the house commenced firing at a mark. He said he was prac-

ting so that he might be sure to hit me if I should run. He finally came into the house, half drunk; and after flirting around, cocked his pistols, took aim at me, and asked the others if they thought he could hit me. He said he had a good mind to try, just for the fun of the thing. While going on in this way he fired off one of the pistols. The ball passed close by me, struck a stone in the fire-place, glanced, and hit my arm. Now all this might have been done accidentally; but it looked to me very much like an accident done on purpose; and though it might have been fun to them, it was not such fun as I had been in the habit of indulging in. But then in the worst event, there stood the good preacher, to mumble over the funeral service, and sanctify the murder; so it was not to be expected that he should be found guilty of wrong.

The old man, however, was at last persuaded to put up his pistols by the kind-hearted preacher, who afterwards boasted of saving my life. Wonderful mercy! to save that which, if his own words were true, and his abuse correct, was a disgrace to all the world, and a curse to me! The landlord swore that I should not have a mouthful to eat in his house, so I had to go to bed supper-

less, though I had not eaten anything since morning.

After they were fairly tired down with their carousal, they prepared to retire, if the packing of half a dozen in a very small room can be so called. They displayed as great bravery, and as much vigilance, as the sentinels who guarded the French Emperor on Helena; for they called in five men and one woman, to sleep in the same room with me. After placing all the chairs and tables in the room against the door, they ventured to lie down; and watching by turns, they managed to keep their dangerous prisoner through the night. But the old man was greatly surprised to find me there in the morning. I suppose he expected I should escape by some witchery, or jugglery, for when he woke he bawled out, "Hello! *You is there, is you?*"

"I am safe," said I.

"Well," he returned, "it is more than I expected. I did not believe there was enough men in the house to keep you." He said he thought the d——d Yankees were like fleas, hard to put your finger on, and still harder to hold.

I told him it was not the first time the Yankees had been belied, and I hoped he

would have a better opinion of them in future.

They had all drunk too much liquor to get up till about breakfast time. When the meal was ready, the preacher got the old man to give me a biscuit, and a cup of milk, which somewhat relieved my faintness; and after we had done eating, or rather they—for mine, being a short horse, was soon curried—we started on our last day's journey.

As there were but three men to accompany me on that day, the landlord thought I should not be safe unless I was bound. So he took a bed-cord, and wrapped me up like a bundle of hay. So completely was I bound, that I could scarcely sit on my horse; and it was with the greatest difficulty that I could breathe. We had not proceeded a quarter of a mile before they had to cut off the rope; but their fears had been so excited by the old man, that they were extremely apprehensive about the result. They need not surely have been much afraid; for three, with shot-guns and side-arms, ought to have been able to keep a single unarmed man with perfect ease, and safety to themselves; and I know they could not have been such fools as to believe otherwise. But they probably thought I

might fall from my horse, or he might get frightened and fall down, or in some way throw me off, and hurt me, so they tied my feet to the stirrups! Or they might have done all this merely to harass me—who knows? But at any rate their pains were superfluous.

Nothing worthy of note occurred on our last day's journey, until we got within three miles of Thomaston, which is the county seat of Upson County. Here they must stop to get something to eat; but I soon learned that they had another object in halting, which was to dispatch a herald, for the purpose of announcing our arrival, and requesting an extra guard to escort us into town. After finishing our meal we proceeded on our way, till we came within a mile of Thomaston, where we again halted, to wait for the arrival of the *extra train*. They soon came up; and foremost among them was Burrill Richards, who wished to gain notice by exulting over a fallen foe—as he thought—and abusing one who could not help himself, though he wished to attribute it to another cause, in which he was pleased to consider that I had acted a vindictive part, by swearing in order to uphold a poor man's oath. The plaintiff in this case

had prosecuted Mr. Richards' father-in-law for stealing hogs, and actually convicted him of it, years afterward. I shall refer to this case again, and show the difference between the *proof* of guilt in the two cases. This was a pretty strong hint that I could swear as I pleased, if it only agreed with him. So he wished to make it appear that I was his enemy. I had always regarded his father-in-law, and family, as very excellent, kind, and worthy people; but as for himself I had never either liked, or disliked him. I told him that I had been fortunate enough to find my testimony, in the case referred to, corresponding with that of the most worthy men in the county, though theirs had followed mine, and that I could not barter my principles, let alone my oath, for the fear or favor of any one.

The herald who preceded us, spread the news so effectually, that the people had gathered from all quarters by the time we got into town; and for once I was the "observed of all observers," though I do not know that I had altered very materially from my general looks and appearance. There were some honorable exceptions to this gazing and staring; for there were those, even there, who had not sunk so low as to gloat over one in

misfortune, whose feelings they knew to be sufficiently lacerated without their intrusion.

In order to prevent common sympathy from being extended to me, when J. J. Cary, Esq., wished to ask me a few questions in private, they raised a cry that there was a plot for my escape. When we stepped into his office they kindled fires around it, in order to see me if I came out; for it was by this time quite dark; but they were destined to be false prophets. After this the sheriff came into the office and arrested me, and a Justice Court was called. This Court has power to commit in any case; but how to establish the proof sufficiently to hold me, was the next point. Samson's escape was an ugly feature to be got over, somehow.

The Constitution of the State of Georgia, Article 3d, Section 1st, Clause 6th, expressly declares, that, "the Superior Court shall have exclusive jurisdiction in all criminal cases, which shall be tried in the county where the crime was committed." The last clause of that part of the Constitution which I have quoted, had to be proved, before they could hold me legally. They must show that I had committed a crime in the county. No man can be held for trial till *something* is proved

against him. It was not in their power to show that I ever saw the slave.

To make this plain, I will suppose a case. A man in this city loses a watch. It is gone for months; and all this time I am not in the least suspected. But I go to Albany; and on arriving there, a man who has read an advertisement of the lost watch, sees me with a watch and arrests me. But while bringing me back to New York, he loses the watch. He comes on, however, and when the court is called, he is brought in for a witness. He gives a description of the watch which he found in my possession, and this is all that he can do. Now, I ask, what his testimony is worth? He had never seen either the watch, or its owner, before, in his life. Would the loser of the watch dare to stand up, and swear that *that* watch was his, and that I had stolen it? This precisely illustrates my case.

There have frequently been cases where men have refused to swear to property, even when it was theirs, and brought into court before their own eyes. The celebrated case of Emmett, where a man was prosecuted for stealing gold coin, was one of this kind. The prosecutor said he could identify the coin by certain marks. Emmett had some of his own

marked in the same way, and carelessly taking them from his pocket, he mixed them with the stolen ones, and then called on the man to identify his coin. He failed to do it, and the case was thrown out of court.

There was a case lately tried in this State, where they failed to produce a half dollar, which a man was charged with counterfeiting ; and for that reason the man was discharged. In both these cases the property was found upon the men ; and in one case it was brought into court before the owner's eyes ; and still he would not attempt to claim it ; but then his scruples had not been frittered away by any connection with that remorseless "institution" which paralyzes every nerve of moral sensibility and murders Conscience. How different was this from the course which my prosecutor pursued, who swore that I was guilty, though he had not seen his property for months, and had no other evidence that I had stolen it, than the fact that property of the same kind was found in my possession.

But let me here state a case which was tried in the same county where mine was ; for this will show how law and justice are administered in Georgia. It is the same one to which allusion has already been made. A wealthy

individual had stolen the hogs of a poor man, and was prosecuted for it. The owner, and three of his brothers, went into court, and swore that they found the hogs in possession of the defendant. The magistrate asked the witnesses if they could swear, without reservation, that the hogs belonged to their brother? They said they had always seen them^d at their brother's house; he always claimed them; every one said they were his; and that they were the same hogs that he now swore were his. The magistrate said that he did not see sufficient ground to hold the prisoner, unless they would swear they saw him buy and pay for them. So he discharged the prisoner. Let every one contrast these cases with mine, and draw his own conclusions.

But let it also be kept in mind that, in the first place, they had to prove that I had committed the crime; and in the second place, that it had been done in the county. It was not in their power to do this. No one knew where I overtook Samson, nor how I came by him, nor indeed if he really was the slave found in my possession. I had never been seen with him in Upson; and no one that saw him in my possession, ever saw him in the possession of any one else. And further-

more, the slave was not to be found, and therefore could not be identified in court. But then something must be done. Some plan must be adopted to hold me.

When those men were called who arrested me, they gave a description of the slave, and swore that they found him in my possession. His owner, Allen Walker, then went on the stand, and swore that the slave was his property, and that I stole him from Upson. How did he know that the slave described was his? He had not seen him for months; and he did not know whether he was dead or alive. Was there one particle of proof going to show that I had Walker's slave; or any other than presumptive proof that he was not my own, bought and paid for with my own money? And yet this was all, and the only evidence they could produce! The veriest simpleton cannot fail to see that any court governed by law or justice, could not possibly commit on such grounds! And any man, who is careful of his own integrity, or has the least respect for truth, would have seen the danger of swearing as he did, and have felt that he had perjured himself. He did perjure himself most wickedly; for guilt lies not in the ACT, but in the INTENTION. He

meant to swear just as he did ; but it was about a thing which he did not know ; and if it happened to be true, the truth did not change or lessen his guilt. If I shoot at a man with an intention to kill, the failing to hit him does not lessen my guilt. In a moral sense I am as guilty as if I had killed him, although the law will not try me for murder. And though he shot at me with prejudice and malice in his oath, and though that oath chanced to be true, yet, without his knowing this, he was just as guilty as if he had sworn to an absolute falsehood, because an oath, to be valid, and therefore just, or innocent, must be based on absolute knowledge of the fact sworn to ; and when not so based, it is perjury, and can be nothing else. Such are the means by which the "peculiar institution" is supported ! Here was the claimant of a slave permitted to perjure himself in the most bold and daring manner, while the court, by its countenance, aided, sustained and upheld him in that perjury ; and by committing on wholly insufficient and untenable grounds, were guilty of an outrage against the Constitution of the State, against common law, and against the peace, happiness and liberty

of an individual, whose dearest rights, through their violated sanctity, had been infringed.

Had the slave been brought into court, they could then have held me lawfully. That would have been sufficient testimony to have bound me over for trial. I do not see how a man can be deprived of his liberty, or held at all, until something is proved against him; and nothing that was there brought forward, could be, for one moment, considered PROOF by any person of common sense, and it only shows how ready they were to perjure themselves by virtually violating their sacred oaths of office, for the single purpose of upholding the public and common iniquity. Allen Walker, as I have already shown, did not, and could not, know that I had his slave, or that I had ever seen him since he ran away. They who arrested me only knew that I had a slave, without knowing how he came into my possession, or what had been his previous relations.

I had no defense to make, but to take exceptions to such evidence. My counsel thought best not to do even that; for, from the excitement that was prevailing, he doubtless saw that if they would hold me on such grounds, by a strenuous defense they would

be still more excited to retain their hold, however convincing his arguments might be. He advised me to lie in jail until the sitting of the Superior Court. So by these unjust and unlawful means, I was bound over to the Superior Court in the sum of two thousand dollars. On the 8th day of March, I was committed to jail, to await the higher court which was to convene on the second Monday of the August following.

CHAPTER VI.

IMPRISONMENT IN JAIL.

"Brightest in dungeons, Liberty ! thou art ;
For there thy habitation is the heart,—
The heart which love of thee alone can bind ;
And when thy sons to fetters are consigned,—
To fetters and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
Their country conquers in their martyrdom !"

Prisoner of Chillon.

It was my misfortune to be placed under the charge of one of the worst men in the world, an avaricious, vindictive, and heartless person. He possessed no more magnanimity than a wolf ; and being as nearly as possible without feeling himself, he could have little respect for the feelings of others. I do not bear this testimony alone ; for I never saw any person under his charge, who did not execrate his very name. What made my case worse than it would otherwise have been, he acted in the double capacity of jailer and sheriff ; so I had no one to complain to but the Inferior Court ; and I thought that in even that would be found too low a sense of just-

ice to set me right. I had just had a specimen wherewith to gauge the sense of right in one court, and I was not over anxious to throw myself upon the mercy of another. There seemed to be little probability of gaining anything by complaint, and it might be the means of provoking even worse treatment.

I well knew that the sheriff could break the spirit of the law in every particular, and would not fail to do it, if I had him censured. The eighth division of the Penal Code, article II., section III., contains the punishment of jailers for cruelty, in the words following: "If any jailer be guilty of willful inhumanity, or oppression to any prisoner under his care, or custody, such jailer shall be punished by removal from office, and imprisonment and labor in the penitentiary, for any time not less than one year, nor longer than three years." The law thus defines the jailer's fees for "Dieting a prisoner per day, allowing two pounds of bread, one and a-half pounds of beef, or one pound of pork, with a sufficiency of water, all good and wholesome provisions, 56½ cents." The above extracts may be found in Hotchkiss' Statute Law of Georgia, p. 904; and on the 854th page of the same digest, we find the formula of the jailer's oath

of office. Here is that of my jailer, "I Samuel Carraway, do solemnly swear, that I will well and truly do and perform, all and singular, the duties of jailer for the county of Upson, and that I will humanely treat all criminals who may be brought to jail."

Now let us see how he fulfilled the above duties, and how he kept his oath. He fed me on the coarsest food, the fattest outside of bacon; and the corn bread often contained the print of other teeth than mine. He brought this only twice a day, often not more than once a day; and on a single occasion—it was the Fourth of July—not at all. I suppose he was afraid I should celebrate the great anniversary of American Liberty if he allowed me my scraps of dried bread and rusty bacon! He kept the jail in the most filthy manner. It was not once swept while I was there. He would neither sweep it himself, nor get me a broom to sweep it with, although the law, as set forth by the above authority, demands that the jail shall be kept clean, under a penalty of \$500. The law does not say that he shall bring the prisoner's meals three times a day, nor even twice a day; but that is its spirit. If he had given me seven pounds of bacon, fourteen hounds

of bread, and a barrel of water once a week, he would certainly have given me the full measure of my weekly allowance ; but that would not have been what the law intended.

Shortly after I went to jail there was a man put in for debt ; and as he knew me we'll, he preferred to stay with me for the sake of company ; but Carraway could not endure to allow me this small enjoyment longer than a week. The measure of his benevolence could not reach so far. He ordered the man out ; and after he went to his room Carraway followed, and told him the people would talk about his staying with such a man as I was. Company of any kind was too much pleasure for him to allow me. There is a parallel to this in the jailer who killed Bonnivard's petted mouse in Chillon, because the poor little wretch was a kind of miserable comfort to him !

The meat he furnished was so very fat and rusty, that I proposed to exchange it for molasses ; which I effected by a hint that such a course would be the cheapest for him. He was ever alive to this sense ; and so he brought me a gallon of molasses, which lasted nearly a month. I think he was too stingy ever to have fattened that bacon ; but he

could well afford to fat several hogs from the profits he made from my imprisonment.

Let any one conceive, if he can, what my sufferings were during the summer of 1845, which was the hottest and dryest ever known. The water would become so warm in half an hour that it was sickening to drink; yet I could have no exchange for fresh! And this man, who could not give me a drop of water to cool my parched and burning tongue, was a member of a Methodist Church! The more pity for them, to have such villains among them!—the more shame for them that they do not repudiate such unworthy members. No one possessing the common feelings of humanity, to say nothing of Christianity, would have left a dog to suffer as I did. But he never was guilty of humanity, and as for benevolence he was innocent of all such emotions as the child unborn; and one who would accuse him of it, must be malicious indeed.

It is impossible to conceive what I went through during those five months! Decency forbids me to mention the disgusting filth which he allowed around the jail, and which annoyed me beyond measure. He took pleasure in causing me every picksniffin trouble

he could ; and my situation was one of most intense anxiety, and bodily suffering.

There are some circumstances which took place while I was in jail, the date of which I cannot precisely fix. About the middle of April my wife and children came to see me, and remained several hours. I have never seen my children since, but shall avail myself of the first moment after being able to do something for them. My wife came to see me once after that—about the middle of May—and I shall never see her again on earth. The cruel treatment that fell on me, had, at least, one victim !

The next day after I was confined, I wrote to Dr. J. M. Aldrich, and also to one of my brothers. I received several letters from each of them. I wrote to Aaron White, Esq., of New Boston, Connecticut, and to L. Lapham, Esq., of Fall River, Massachusetts. They gave me much good counsel ; and Mr. Lapham would have come on to Georgia to defend me, had it not been in the sickliest season of the year. In the letters I wrote them they were given to understand the case as well as might be without the particulars ; but I wrote Mr. Lapham a tolerably full account of it. Theophilus Shove & Co. sent me testi-

monials of their regard and esteem. It will be remembered that I was in their employ before I left Fall River. One of the letters which I received from J. M. Aldrich, contained \$20. It would afford me great pleasure to publish those letters; but I have no copies of them. All of the above, and all who participated in the work, or feeling of kindness, are entitled to my deep gratitude, and esteem. The editor of a Fall River paper, or some one, sent me the paper regularly. Whoever it was, he has my thanks. Mr. John Murray, of Thomaston, but formerly of New York, has my good wishes; and, if I ever get able I will pay him for a mattress which he sent to the jail for me to lie on. Samuel Carraway's wife has my thanks for sending me a bottle of molasses; and though last, not least, a negro woman has as large a share of my gratitude as any, for bringing me fruit at different times. I may have forgotten some other favors; but I wish every one to whom I may be thus indebted, of whatever grade, color, sex, age, or condition, to know that I feel thankful, and they have my lasting gratitude for all and every favor that was extended to me. No one knows, indeed, how it soothes an aching heart, or how it strengthens

one overwhelmed by misfortune, to receive even the most trifling favor. Every generous act is a bright gem, every cheering word is a cherished pearl—every kind look, smile, or glance, is treasured up by one in misfortune.

About a month before my trial came on, I sent for Amos Hammond, Esq., to come and see me. He lived in Monroe County, but was up at the Inferior Court then in session. I asked him what he would ask to defend me. He said that if \$200 could be secured to him, he would do the best he could for me. I was unable to raise that sum; for the sheriff had taken all my stock, and farming tools, to pay the costs of the prosecution; and property at such times brings not more than a quarter of its value.

I passed most of the time, during that period, in reading such books as I could procure. That was an awful summer for me; and but the faintest conception of it can be given by any language! The most fearful meaning of that true history will never be known, until it is read directly from the soul, on whose seared tablets it has been inscribed, as it were with the scorching point of lightning, and the sting of scorpions. Some idea may be had of the anguish I endured, from the fact that when I

went to jail I had not a single gray hair, and in the space of five months I became quite gray. My physical sufferings were great; but I fretted and chafed still more in mind, to think that I was unlawfully detained,—“cabinéd, cribbéd, and confinéd” under the charge of such a dastard as Samuel Carraway. Such men ought to be held up to the world’s condemnation; and as long as a single person who has been in Carraway’s charge lives upon earth, so long, at least, his name will be held in the execration it deserves. No excuse can be rendered for such a crime as ill-treatment of a prisoner; and even repentance can scarcely hope for forgiveness from those who have felt its iniquity.

I was never very delicate, or particular about my food, but I claim to be neither an Esquimaux, nor a dog, to swallow solid lumps of fat, of the most disgusting kind; and even if I had belonged to the family of swine, it would have been hardly just, even to the nature of a hog, that I should be left to wallow in filth, and kept forever in a pent-up sty, without a breath of fresh air!

The summer wore away at length; but none can even imagine how slowly—how

wearily ; and at last the day arrived which was to decide my fate.

In Hotchkiss's Statute Laws of Georgia, page 789, will be found the following law : " Every person charged with a crime, or offense, which may subject him, or her, to death, or imprisonment in the penitentiary for the term of three years, or more, shall be furnished, previous to his, or her arraignment, with a copy of the Indictment, and a list of the witnesses who gave testimony before the Grand Jury." This was not done. No copy of the Indictment was ever given me. Was it because they dared not put such an iniquitous case into the formality of black and white, lest they should be ashamed to look their own actions full in the face ?

CHAPTER VII.

THE TRIAL.

ON the 14th day of August, I was taken out for trial. The immortal Carraway displayed consummate ability in gathering the people around the jail; and though he well knew that I could scarcely walk, he summoned a posse to guard me to the court-house. With the aid of him and his guard, I arrived there in safety. The case was called, and the Indictment read, to which I plead not guilty.

The judge asked me if I had counsel? I told him I had not. He then appointed Amos Hammond and Z. Harmond to defend me. The case was one which they did not like to defend, being very unpopular, and they were not to get paid for it; yet, I think they did as well as any others, under the circumstances, would have done.

The following is the form of the Indictment: "Georgia, Upson County. The grand jurors sworn, chosen, and selected for the county of Upson, to wit (here follows a list of the jurors), in the name, and in behalf of, the

citizens of Georgia, charge and accuse L. W. Paine, of the county and State aforesaid, with the offense of simple larceny; for that the said L. W. Paine did take unlawfully, and with the force of arm, a large, likely mulatto man, about the age of thirty years, the property of one Allen Walker, on the 31st day of March, 1845." After numerous repetitions of "the said L. W. Paine," "the said Allen Walker," and "said slave," the customary clause is added, "contrary to the laws of said State, and the good order, peace and dignity thereof."

The next step was the empanneling of the jury. I soon saw that there could be but faint hope of a fair trial, from the course which the jurors pursued; for when the following question was put, "Have you any prejudice or bias resting on your mind, for or against the prisoner at the bar?" many of them answered, "No." Yet, it was well known that they had abused and vilified me in the worst manner. Some of them, however, answered honestly and fairly that they had those feelings against me.

After a long trial we made out the required number. Then the Solicitor-General opened the case to the Jury, with a speech full of bom-

bastio declamation, and containing the following falsehoods: He said that he would give me a fair trial. Wonderfully generous! He said that he should be able to prove that I stole the property from Upson County! The last assertion startled me. I could not devise how he would be able to do that. The reader will here bear in mind that law which I quoted in connection with my commitment, and which compels one to be tried in the county where the crime is committed; and also, if I was once tried, and not found guilty, that would be the end of the case. The slave had not been found, so that it was impossible for them to identify the property. I was ready for trial, and all their witnesses were there; so it left them no room to put off the case. They had not been able to find any one who had seen the slave in my possession, and who also knew that he belonged to Walker. The solicitor had instituted inquiries in all directions, for the purpose of deciding in what county to try me, and had at last chosen Upson, yet without being able to prove that I had committed any offense whatever in the county. They well knew that no such whip-the-devil-round-the-stump kind of business, nor any such bungling circumlocution would be tole-

rated in the Superior Court as was carried on in the Justice Court. How were they to leap over all these obstacles? In what way, and by what means, were they to break down all these barriers? They found a way to do it, notwithstanding the apparent difficulties. They accomplished the work in their own style.

Allen Walker, and several others, had paid me a visit at the jail about six weeks before the trial, at my request. We had a long talk on the subject; and I related many circumstances to him relative to the case; but nothing which he could lawfully use against me. I knew the law relative to the proof which was necessary, very well, and also that I could be tried only once.

The first witness that went on the stand was Peter Butts. He swore that I told him in jail that I took the property from Upson County. I knew not what to think of that. I felt sure that he was laboring under a mistake, supposing that I had said so. But what was my surprise, when Allen Walker went on the stand, and swore to the same facts. This completely confounded me. When they were cross-questioned by my Counsel, they adhered to their perjured assertions. I knew

not what to say, or think, or do. This was carrying the war into Africa, in a way which I was not prepared for. The sole chance I had left was to upset their testimony by that of others present; and the only man I could rely on to do that, was as good a man as I could find in the county, Dr. D. Kendall; but, on going to seek him, he had just been called away to visit one who was dangerously sick. There I was; the case had to go on. What was I to do? The only man who could render any service in my case was not to be had. I knew that I was not guilty of telling those men what they swore I did; but something must be done. I was compelled to act promptly, and with decision. I knew the character of the people I had to deal with. I knew that by resisting the case I could gain nothing. I had no witnesses to combat the evidence which they had produced. I had none summoned, having rested in the belief that they could not prove what was necessary to convict me. Had I entertained the most remote idea of the course they would pursue, I should have been prepared for it, by summoning Dr. D. Kendall, who would, I think, have rebutted their testimony. But I have never seen him since he came to the jail with

Walker, except a few minutes at court, when I first went into the court-house; and I do not know how he understood the matter, as I never made any inquiries.

I knew, if I pushed and urged the case to the full extent, that it would cause the judge to cast the whole power of the law upon me, and still result in nothing to my advantage. Though I felt as keenly as any one could feel the injury and outrage that was perpetrated upon me, yet I knew it was madness and folly to allow myself to be thrown into exasperation, and thus injure my cause, possibly beyond redemption. My hand was in the lion's mouth, and it was good policy to get it out as easily as possible. I knew that it was the practice to favor those who did not urge their case, and put the State to expense by delaying the court. I had frequently been urged by different persons, both before and at the court, to plead guilty. I felt confident their object was to lure me into committing myself, knowing their own inability to do so. But now I feel assured it was done to save themselves a little uneasiness which might possibly rest on their consciences, after their false swearing. I thought at the time, nor have I seen any reason to change my mind,

that the best thing I could do was to make no further opposition. Therefore, I told my Counsel that I wished them to withdraw all defense; that they could plainly see that the Court, the Jury, the Witnesses, and the People, were all excited and prejudiced against me; that the Solicitor would leave no stone unturned to convict, and that my prosecutor had untold riches with which to salve easy consciences for their aid and perjury. He would therefore urge all to do their utmost against me, and had employed the ablest counsel in the county to aid the Solicitor. While all these advantages were in their hands, I had not one in my favor.

They asked me if I would plead guilty to the charge of stealing the slave. I told them no; but if it would be of any satisfaction to my prosecutor, I would say frankly that the slave who was found with me belonged to him; but I would more frankly say that I never acknowledged having him in my possession, in Upson County. They said that it would be best to remain as quiet as possible until after the sentence was passed upon me; for should I irritate the mind of the Court, it would be worse for me; so I said no more,

but submitted to my fate with the best grace possible. Thus ended my trial.

I well remember that Allen Walker asked me the question, where I came up with the slave. I told him that I could not designate the place; for it was in the night; and I was not acquainted with the roads; but he well knew that I had traveled, and was familiar with, all the roads in the county. I made no averment, nor said aught that could be so construed, or which might lead him even to think that I met the slave in Upson County. I knew at once his object in asking that question; and I was not such a fool as to cut my own throat, even if I had met him there. I am so sure that I am right, that I would willingly stake six years more of imprisonment against the liberty of the slave. But they saw the utter impossibility of proving where I got the property, and that they could not identify him in Court; so they had to adopt some means to find me guilty. Whether they did it willfully, or not, I cannot say. The most charitable face I can put on the matter is, to say they might have thought so. But after all, I see little room for that saving clause. One thing, however, I do *know*, and that is I never *told* them so. Was it not, then, by

perjury, that I was consigned to long, bitter, cruel years of incarceration? Whether I was guilty, or not, is a question entirely aside. I was to be *proven* so. I did intend to liberate the slave. I was guilty of that crime; and I did not fear to own it, if it had been fairly proved against me.

As soon as the trial was over I was remanded to jail, till the last day of the Court, when I was to receive my sentence. As soon as I got there, I tried to think of something which I had said, that might have caused those men to swear as they did; but the more I thought of it, the surer I felt of my position. So I ever have been, from that day to the present; and it has been one of the worst burdens I have had to bear, to think that I was dealt wrongfully with.

On Saturday I was taken out to be sentenced. As soon as I was seated in the Court House, the Judge ordered me to stand up; and then, with looks of the greatest satisfaction, and in tones which were more calculated to rouse the passions, than humble pride, he addressed me, in the manner and spirit following:

“Your looks and appearance indicate that you have been well brought up. You are a

northern man; and since your stay among us, you have displayed talents and abilities which ought to have led you to different acts. You have pursued the common business of life, and received the protection of our laws. We have reposed in you our confidence, and extended to you our hospitalities. But you now stand charged with a crime of the blackest dye—one that leads to murder, arson, and civil war; and you have returned the hospitalities of the south with the blackest ingratitude. But in consideration of your not urging your case forward, and not delaying the Court, and putting the State to expense, I will take three from the ten years which I could give you, and sentence you to seven years of hard labor in the State-Prison; and I hope that when you will have served your time out, you may become a good member of society."

The law for taking, abducting, or stealing negroes, puts the punishment from four to ten years in the State-Prison. If all Judges demean themselves in this way, toward persons whom they sentence, I do not wonder at their being so generally denounced by prisoners as they are. Having no further business in Court, as the lawyers say, I was returned

to jail, to wait the arrival of the State-Prison guard. It is the duty of the Clerk of the Court, to write to the Warden of the state-prison, and notify him that there is a prisoner sentenced. As the distance is seventy miles, I had to remain several days before the arrival of the guard.

I felt relieved—and easier and better after I had received my sentence, than I had done for months. I knew my doom; all anxiety was over, and all suspense at an end. On the 20th, the guard arrived. It was with pleasure that I heard the news: for I was anxious to escape from a dastard's hand—from one who had me kept in filth, and who fed and treated me like a brute. I know that if he ever reads these pages, he will chuckle, to think of all the misery he caused me. But I hope he will see the iniquity of such acts; and, by altering his course, treat prisoners more as they ought to be treated. I know that he will be full of wrath, if he ever sees what I have written, for he never could bear the truth, and I have written nothing else; nor can I take back one word or letter: and if his hatred is increased, he may rest assured that he cannot have so bad an opinion of me as I have of him.

I left him on the 21st, and have never seen him since, nor ever wish to again.

It was very cheering to breathe the fresh air as we rode along. The guard stopped, and got me fruit. Peaches were then ripe, and they tasted very luscious. The air was sweet and soft, and, but for the tightness of my irons, I should have had a very pleasant ride. The guard was very kind, and ready to make me as easy as possible.

On the 22d, we arrived at Milledgeville, where the State-Prison is located; and it looked somber and gloomy enough. I went into the blacksmith's shop, and had my irons taken off—then to the cell building, and put on my prison suit; and thence to the office of the Principal Keeper, to receive a lecture on my duties of prison life. The lecture contained much good advice; and I took the keeper to be a very fine man; but he proved to be quite the contrary; nor was this the first time I found that kind words are not always the precursors of kind actions.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE STATE-PRISON.

"O Time! the beautifier of the dead,
Adorner of the ruin, comforter
And only healer when the heart hath bled!
Time, the corrector, where our judgments err—
The test of love—truth—sole philosopher—
For all besides are sophists, from thy thrift,
Which never loses, though it doth defer.
Time, the avenger! unto thee I lift
My hands, and eyes, and heart, and crave of thee a gift.

"Amid this wreck, where thou hast made a shrine
And temple, more divinely desolate;
Among thy mighty offerings, here are mine,
Ruins of years, though few, yet full of fate!
If thou hast ever seen me too elate,
Hear me not: but if calmly I have borne
Good, and reserved my pride against the hate
Which shall not overwhelm me, let me not have worn
This iron in my soul in vain."

I RETIRED that night with sad and heavy feelings. I saw that all was lost, and felt the load of oppression resting on my heart. I knew that long years of woe, misery, and bondage were before me; but worse than these were

"The woes we see not,—which throb through
The immedicable soul, with heart-aches ever new!"

But when all else was obscured, one bright star still shone to cheer me on—the lovely star of Hope. That alone seemed to keep me from sinking into the deepest dejection and despair. But I nerved myself for the prospect which lay before me. I aroused my slumbering fortitude, to sustain me in the fiery ordeäl through which I was to pass. I put on the strongest armor of the soul, resolved to grapple manfully with the grim Destiny I already saw in the dim distance, stalking like a giant demon, across the desert of life, yet standing out in bold relief against the dark and clouded sky. I sought for that divine alchemy, which, though it cannot escape, may yet so neutralize the elements of misery, as to convert them into a sanative medicine, or even a healthful nutriment. I strove continually to stifle all such recollections and reflections, as tended to disturb the mind, and kept my thoughts from the harrowing subject as much as possible. To adopt the noble sentiment of the lovely but unfortunate Madame Roland, "I steeled my heart against adversity, and avenged myself on fate by deserving the happiness it did not bestow."

I went there with a full determination to fulfill all the duties required of me, and to obey all rules which I thought right and just. But I never could bring myself to believe that those rules which prohibited our talking, and also our having light in our cells at night, *were* proper; and I never obeyed them, except when constrained to do so by the presence of the officers. I arose in the morning to commence my first day's work with feelings which it would be difficult to analyze.

It is the usual practice to allow prisoners to follow any branch of trade they may desire; but it is by no means always followed in this prison. I was first put in the cabinet-shop, where I staid about three weeks, and was then transferred to the carriage-shop. The change from inactivity in jail to hard labor, being so great, and my reduced state when the change was made, had such an effect, that it was some time before I recovered my usual health. In fact, I was not able to work for two months after I went to prison; but I was compelled to do it, or be punished.

The treatment I received the first year I was there, would not have been adopted by any just or humane man, to say nothing of a Christian; yet the Warden was a praying

member of the Methodist Church! Could those who have charge of prisoners know what a prisoner's feelings are, how the great change which takes place affects both his mind and body—the strangeness of all things—and what he feels and suffers—they would give him time to adapt himself to the new and unnatural condition in which he is placed.

The law very clearly defines both the kind and quantity of a prisoner's food, thus: "Of bacon, half a pound, or pork, three quarters of a pound; hind quarter of beef, one pound: fore quarter, a pound and a quarter; corn bread, and such garden vegetables as the Principal Keeper may provide per day" This we did not get for the first two and a half years that I was there; and it was the occasion of great dissatisfaction among the prisoners.

The law also says, that the clothing shall consist of "one round jacket, one vest, and one pair of trowsers, of kerseys, two pair of shoes, two pair of woolen-yarn socks, two shirts, two pair of trowsers made of cotton cloth, and one round jacket of the same." There was a great deal of fault found about our clothes. We never got a vest, never but

one pair of socks, and sometimes none at all, and never our cotton jackets.

The law also says, that "every prisoner shall be furnished with a cheap mattress, and such a number of blankets as the Principal Keeper believes shall be needed. The mattress was truly a very cheap concern—for it was nothing but an old dirty sack, filled with shavings. As to the blankets, the Keeper, it appears, thought we needed just none at all; for he bought none.

But in the year '48, when the new Keeper came to office, he had all the mattresses taken out, emptied, washed, and well filled with cotton, and new blankets for all. He also fed us plentifully, and clothed us well.

A short time after I went into the carriage-shop, I was taken sick, and reported myself so to the Keeper. But he had an idea, that no one could be sick unless he had a fever, and that that was the key to unlock all deception. I have heard him say often, that no one could be sick of any disease, without fever: and I dare say he has this notion yet, for I never knew him to change his mind about anything. He would not consent for me to stop work; and I worked on for five days, during which time I ate only two meals;

and the next Sunday he kept me in my cell all day, as a restorative. About the middle of the day, I was taken with a severe ague; and in the morning I found it impossible to go to work. So I lay in bed till I had another ague, and then sent for the doctor. He came, and at once ordered me to the hospital, and said he thought me in a very bad condition. I was in the hospital ten days before I got able to work; but I took advantage of the very first returning strength to go out, and resume my work; for there was nothing ever made the Keeper so angry and "down" on a man, as to see him in the hospital. After I got better, the doctor told me, that nothing but a good constitution had saved me.

I knew I was in severe hands, and my only chance was to leave him no room to find fault, and that if I was steady and industrious, and pursued a correct and upright course, he could not abuse me. I desired to soften his prejudices, and by the correctness of my deportment wear out his rigor; but it was a long time before I could be allowed the favors that others were.

When I had been in the carriage shop about six months, there was an opening in the foundry for some one, and I asked for the place.

I had two objects in this change: one was to get from under the hands of the overseer of the carriage shop, who was a mean and petty tyrant to those who were under him, and at the same time a most suppliant and cringing tool of those who were over him. My other reason was, that the keeper took a great interest in the foundry, and allowed those who worked there more liberty than others.

He granted my request; and about the middle of March, '46, I went to the foundry. I began my new trade with pleasure, for the prospect before me already began to brighten. Determined to make good use of it, I unbent all my energies to learn all, and as fast as I could. I was attentive and industrious about my work; and all my leisure, such as meal hours and Sundays, I spent in study.

When I first arrived there was a great dearth of books,—the Bible, a few religious tracts, with several grammars and arithmetics, composed the catalogue. But about this time that most worthy, benevolent, and philanthropic lady, Miss D. L. Dix, sent the prisoners a present in the form of a library. Could she but know the great pleasure, instruction and benefit which, not only myself, but many others, have reaped from her dona-

tion, she would feel herself in some measure paid for her noble and appropriate gift, by our deep and lasting gratitude. I shall always remember her with the kindest emotions of my heart.

After the arrival of the library I commenced a regular course of study and reading. For several months during the cold weather, we went to our cells before five o'clock; and as I did not go to bed until between ten and eleven, there were left more than five hours for study. I tried my hand or rather my head, at trigonometry, geometry, and algebra, and read or studied all the works on natural philosophy, astronomy, and mechanics. I preferred a thorough course in such branches as interested me, to indiscriminate reading: and all the works in the above sciences which our library contained, I have read frequently. Many is the hour that I have whiled away by the light of my secretly-kept lamp; and though my body was confined in a lonely cell, the mind was free as air, reveling amid scenes described by travelers, historians, biographers, poets, and divines. Though trammelled and pent up in worse than a "Utica," yet the whole boundless universe was mine, to think and reflect upon. In the school of affliction

my mind was learning to discipline itself—to see that misfortune is the common lot of man—to gather strength from defeat, and to soar above the troubles of life.

My studies were not only a great *pleasure*, but they were also a great benefit to me in various ways. They kept my mind engaged when I was not at work, thus preventing it from turning to other, and more doleful subjects; and they enabled me to render assistance to others, both officers and prisoners.

After the year '47, we were allowed to take such papers as were neutral in politics. These we received from various parts of the Union; and thenceforward I kept myself pretty well informed of passing events. This was a source of great enjoyment, for once more we were put in communication with the world.

It is unmerciful, unjust, and altogether wrong, to deprive prisoners of the regular papers of the day. It is unmerciful, because the embarrassments, trials, and difficulties which he has to encounter, on first being released, are already sufficiently numerous, almost to appall him; and how are they increased if he has been kept in ignorance of the doings of the world; for then he is, as it were, taken

out of the blackest midnight and plunged suddenly into the most intense light of noon-day. It is unjust, because no man has a right wantonly to deprive another of that which is for his best interest; and there is nothing more necessary to this than that one should keep himself informed of the inventions, improvements and passing events of the age. It is wrong, because it leads him astray, throws him into a still more false position, and keeps him unnecessarily behind the times.

I kept no journal of the events which took place while I was in prison; and had I done so, I could not have preserved it, for the officers were all the time searching the cells, desks and drawers, for forbidden articles. I shall give only the principal events which transpired, in such a way as I think the reader will best understand them.

The rules were very strict until the year 1848. No talking was allowed, except on Sundays. We were permitted to write only one letter a year, and to see no one except our nearest relations. The most common punishment was confinement in our cells all day on Sundays, with no refreshment but bread and water. In extreme cases, whipping with the paddle was resorted to. This instru-

ment is made of a piece of leather about five inches wide, and twice as long, fastened on a short handle of wood. From ten to forty blows are given at a time, according to the offense. This is a very severe punishment.

As I was charged with an offense which they considered the most aggravating, I had no favors to expect. They always regarded me as one who deserved no lenity. The keeper who was there when I went, and who staid till the first of January, 1848, was always much prejudiced against me. He never gave me even-handed justice, but always thought me a dangerous man. I was aware of all this, and determined to give him no chance to vent his feelings on me. I was confident that I hailed from the wrong latitude to suit his taste; and though he could not catch me in any offense worthy of notice, yet he would coop me up on the slightest charges. The following incidents will show his feelings toward me:—

About the 1st of June, 1846, the man who wheeled the coal for the foundry and the blacksmith's shop, found a ham in the coal-house, and to keep himself out of difficulty he thought it best to take it to one of the officers. But before he did so, one of the men who

worked with me in the foundry cut off a piece, and cooked it; and after we had run off the blast, we sat down to eat our ham. But before we had got a bite of it, along came the Assistant Keeper, and seeing us with more meat than he thought we had for our rations, he asked us where we got it. We explained the case to him, and he reported it to the Principal Keeper, who came and asked me if I could not get along without stealing. I told him that it was not stolen, but found. He asked me if it was mine. I told him no; and that it had not been proven to be any one's. He asked if I did not get enough to eat. I told him I did not. He said I got as much as his negroes did. Here I was fairly choking with a desire to tell him I had no doubt of that,—and still did not get half enough; but knowing it would not do to say this, I kept silent. I was like the Yankee who said, when the Indians had him, he “wanted to talk darnation bad.” He finally left, and ordered me to be kept up four Sundays on bread and water. It is a rule to specify the charge when they keep up a man, but he never made any charge against me. I do not think he could find any word in *Webster* that would designate the offense, if it can

be so called; but one of the prisoners who was quite a wag, said, he kept me up for casting fried ham out of iron.

Some time after this the Assistant Keeper ordered me to make a good, strong box, to hold the wagon and carriage boxes which I had cast. I went to work and made the box; but about the time I got it done, the Principal Keeper came along, and asked me why I was making that box? I told him the reason. He went to the Assistant Keeper about it, for he would allow nothing done unless he ordered it. The latter gentleman denied it; and they both came down to where I was.

The Principal then said, "Why did you tell me you were ordered to make that box?"

"Because it was true," I replied.

The Assistant then said, "I did not tell you to make *that* box."

"But," said I, "you told me to make *a* box, and this is *a* box." He saw that he was cornered, and said no more. But though they failed to convict me about the box, the inventive genius of the Principal Keeper soon found sufficient cause to coop me up; for he charged me with wasting nails—as though I could make a box without nails. The absurdity of the charge was such that the prisoners

always had a laugh at the keeper's expense, as long as I remained there. I was under this Warden about two years and a half; and I can say, with truth, that I gave him as little cause for complaint as any one in the prison. Though it is about as easy to cut through a mountain of iron, as through prejudice, yet a correct and straight-forward course will, at last, work through it. In this way I gradually softened his feelings toward me; and I passed through his wardenship without any further punishment than being kept up on Sunday. His time expired on the first day of January, 1848, and the new Warden was installed in office the same day. This happy change was the consequence of the election of a new Governor.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CONSPIRATORS.

THE last Warden was altogether a different man from the preceding one. He was very lenient; and I do not hesitate to say that he had as much of the milk of human kindness as any man I ever saw. I bear this testimony more cheerfully, from the fact that he was unfavorably impressed toward me. He was far advanced in years. Honest, frank, and humane, he wished to do what was right and just, himself, and he looked at others through the too flattering medium of his own motives. But he had those around him who took advantage of his goodness, and basely used his confidence. Most of the inside officers remained, for there were few thrown out of place by the new administration. They all tried to have things their own way; and by this means they fell into a quarrel, and kept up a continual strife for more than a year. The prisoners joined in the general feeling, some for one overseer, and some for another. But like all other contentions, the elements

were soon resolved into two parties. At the head of the party which was dominant for a long time, was an officer by the name of McGregor. His principal abettors were three men whose names were Dempsy Justice, Andrew Patterson, and Benjamin F. Tuggle. The former of these had killed three men, two in Georgia, and one in Mississippi. The two murders which he committed in Georgia were unprovoked; yet he got clear through the influence of money, able counsel, and strong friends. He was sent to the prison for ten years, charged with forgery. Governor Towns, who was elected in October, 1847, was his feed counsel and his political and personal friend for years. He had much confidence in him, and placed great dependence on what he said. Patterson was sent for thirty years, on three charges of robbing the mail in the office where he was postmaster, and to which he plead guilty. Tuggle was sent for forgery, for seven years. The last two men were used as wire-pullers.

Justice was to employ the confidence which the Governor had in him, to put the ball in motion. His object was to make it appear that McGregor was the only man who could control the place, and manage its business.

When this was done, McGregor was to step into the Warden's shoes. As a reward for their faithfulness, Justice was to boss the harness and shoe shops, Tuggle, the tan-yard, Patterson, the paint shop and hospital; and another of their strikes was to take the wood and blacksmith's shops. This was their object. It was fully planned, and came well-nigh being effected. Justice became so important a character, that he went where he pleased, at all times, both day and night. He frequently boasted of eating with the Governor, drinking his brandy, and hugging his "yaller gals." They soon had all things as they wished; and whoever did not coincide with them was made to suffer for his temerity. They falsified all things in such a way, and used so much deception, as completely to deceive the Principal Keeper,* making him believe they were his best friends. The consequence was that the Governor and the Warden held off all others, regarding them as being unfriendly to their success; and nearly every prisoner in sheer self-defense either went over to the dominant party or said nothing against their course.

* I wish the reader to understand, that the Warden and Principal Keeper are the same.

In addition to all other woes, wounds, sufferings, and anguish, I had to endure at this period, was the loss of my wife. She had returned to Massachusetts about six weeks after my imprisonment. But the fatal blow was given. She had sunk under a sense of the wrong I was suffering, and left my two children worse than orphans. She died in February, 1848; but the intelligence never reached me until the following June. I cannot speak more on this subject. The thought is too shockingly harrowing for me to dwell upon.

Let us return to the conspirators. From first to last, boldly and frankly, I opposed their designs; and by this means brought down upon my single head their abuse, hatred, and vengeance. I was confident that we could get no better man than the present Warden; but if they succeeded, the prison would be, at once, transformed into a complete Inferno. The only thing I could do was to say nothing, receive all their abuse without reply, wait for an open attack, and then act only on the defensive. I knew they would be likely to fall into the common error of being so elated with success, that they would overstep the bounds of prudence.

The first charge they brought against me

fully proved my expectations. One of McGregor's clique saw me with more writing paper than it was customary for prisoners to have. He had seen me come from the Warden's office the same day, and was sure that I had stolen it. He took it from my drawer, and gave it to McGregor, who at once circulated the story that I had stolen it from the office. I went to him directly, and asked him to prove it. He flew into a passion, and would not listen to me. I then went to the Warden, and told him of the charge, well knowing that he would right me; for I had got the paper from the clerk, by his order, only a few days before. I made a clear vindication; and he ordered McGregor to give me back the paper. I had such positive proof by the officers that it greatly mortified my accusers; but instead of teaching them a lesson, it only made them more reckless, and eager to injure me. So not long after this, McGregor brought another charge against me. He said I had accused him of stealing cucumbers from the prisoners' garden. This was so far-fetched that I had no means of finding out whether such a thing could be true or false; and this common sense should have told him; for I worked on the outside of the prison at that

time, and at such a distance that I could not possibly know what was going on in, or immediately around it. I at once demanded the proof, and asked him to bring it before the Warden. He tried to get an officer to come before the Warden, for the purpose of substantiating his charge; but he would not do it. He then tried a boy sixteen years old, but again failed. At last he got one man to come up; and I proved him a liar by his own witness. He said I had never told him a word of the kind.

This made twice that I had defeated McGregor; and it might naturally be supposed that he would not be in haste to charge me with another offense. But as this increased his hatred against me, he used all means to disparage me with the Governor, and lower me in the estimation of the Warden; and the vindictive spirit with which he pursued me was worthy of a more valuable conquest. But I must say that I paid him back with compound interest, though I battled only with truth; and only with that could I have conquered.

Things moved along rather easier for some time after our last difficulty. They saw that they were not likely to make much out of

me; and I did not interfere with them. I only repelled their attacks.

On the first of October, 1848, the cell-building caught fire from the foundry. It was my good luck to manage the engine so efficiently, and successfully, as to stop the ravages of the fire, and save the property of the State, and that of the citizens. For this act I received the public thanks and compliments of the citizens; and to show that they were in earnest they at once raised a petition, and laid it before the Governor, with letters, and personal appeals, for my release. But the Governor's mind had been too much poisoned to listen to their requests. I always thought hard of Governor Towns for not releasing me at that time, because it was only *his* desire to punish me—that alone caused him to refuse my pardon. No one would have censured him for it; for the whole public voice demanded it—and but one officer refused his signature, and that was McGreggor. This alone is enough to show how violent was his prejudice against me. I did not ask it as a reward, I would have done the same thing the next day, even if I had known that he would not have pardoned me; and at the time I did not have the least idea of even a

word of thanks. I felt that I was but doing my duty ; but I did think that the Governor might have yielded himself to the strong tide that was then setting in my favor, to pardon and release me.

Some time in the month of December following, they turned their weapons against the Chaplain of the prison. His preaching did not suit them. I at once knew that here again they were "barking up the wrong tree." They raised a petition, and prevailed on all but twelve to sign it. There were several who would not sign it who were favorable to all of their other plans. After they got it ready, they sent it over to the Governor, whose anger on receiving it knew no bounds ; for just before it was presented to him the Chaplain had been to see him, and laid the whole case before him. He and the Chaplain, and their families, were very friendly, and the latter was one of the most worthy men in the State.

The Governor came over to the prison in hot haste, and ordered all the men into the dining-room ; and such another blast of indignation, and condemnation, they never listened to before nor since. They saw that they had taken a false step ; but it was too late to re-

tract, for in his hands were their names, recorded in their own proper signatures.

This was a sore defeat of the allied host. They were greatly cut down; and I laughed heartily at their overthrow. They called us the twelve Apostles, out of derision; and that is the only decent name they ever applied to me. But this cured them from ever attempting to raise another petition in the prison. There are men there to this day who would scarcely sign a petition for their own pardon. The very name and thought of such a document makes them mad.

Not long after this had blown over, they prepared to give me another battle. They had let me rest for some time, and I rejoiced so much at the turn affairs had taken in their difficulty with the Chaplain, that they determined to visit their vengeance upon me. My sky was again overcast with dark and lowering clouds. They seemed to say with the Indian chief:

"We've mailed it in the clouds, where the thunder mutters low,
And where the lightning of our hatred falls, you well may
dread the blow!"

All things indicated that they must either conquer then, or give up the contest. No better proof can be given of the extreme

lengths to which they would go to ensnare me, than the foolish and silly course which they adopted in our last battle, which the prisoners called the "Battle of Peace." This had risen from a very silly and trifling affair. It was a practice quite common among the prisoners to write letters to one another, under the pretense that they came from their friends. By altering their handwriting, and properly backing the letters, they could pass them off as genuine. By my writing such a letter to one of the men, they seized an opportunity to renew the attack, and endeavored to make great capital out of it. The man to whom I gave the letter, took it to McGregor; and he set his invention to work to see if he could not get me flogged. He ordered the man to write an answer, and express in the most pointed language his desire and determination to escape, suggesting that by the aid of a friend he could carry it into execution.

I worked on the outside at the time, and the letter I wrote professed to come from a friend of the prisoner outside, stating that the bearer would bring an answer, if desired. In the morning, I received from my Mercury a letter, which I thought would contain some witty or amusing reply; but I found it of a

very different character. I was astonished at the dangerous tone and spirit of its contents, and at first could not well see the object of the writer. He closed by requesting, in the most earnest manner, that an answer might be sent back with a positive reply to his proposition.

My letter had contained nothing but common expressions of friendship and good wishes, and was written without any idea of harm or wrong intentions. I could see no motive for such a reply, but a desire to lay a trap for me ; and I at once made up my mind to spring the steel upon the one who had set it. I therefore answered his letter in a manner which seemed to comply with all of his requests, yet in such guarded language that they could take no advantage of me. They caught the bait with an avidity that showed very plainly the cloven foot. Indeed, so great was their eagerness that they lost sight of the fact, that while all the proposals came from them, I had been so entirely non-committal in reply, that nothing positive could be proved against me.

Three letters passed on each side, those of my correspondent having been written by the advice and order of McGreggor, who intended so to use them as to make it evident that I

had committed an offense worthy of corporal punishment. No set of men ever worked harder to effect any object, than they did to get me whipped. They well knew that I would take no part in aiding the prisoner to escape, and that they could not prove anything of the kind. But they sought to convince the Governor and Warden that I was operating upon the man in such a way as to gain a complete avowal of his object, and then report him to the officers for my own benefit, knowing that could such base self-interest be proved against me, I should, without doubt, be flogged. McGreggor told the Governor that I did little else than keep a continual war among the prisoners. He misrepresented all the facts, showed the letters which I had written, made the most earnest appeals for my punishment, and demanded an order to carry it into execution.

They had done all this without saying a word to me, and before I knew a word about it. After I found it out, I made up my mind to act wholly on the defensive. The Warden had already begun to get his eyes open. They had lorded it with so high a hand, that his confidence in their honesty had become shaken. When they went to him he refused

to take any notice whatever of the affair. The only chance left them was to get the Governor to order an investigation. I calmly waited the result, keeping perfectly cool and collected, and saying not a word. They knew not what to think of my pursuing this very unusual course. But I knew I was in the hands of those who used the intelligence of human beings in the form of craft, only to point and sustain the cruel rapacity of tigers, thus degrading the brutal character by the association. There were fearful odds against me; for so basely had they reported the facts, that every prisoner, with but one single exception, thought me guilty of the alleged meanness. This man's name I must record, for he has as noble a soul, and is as firm a friend as any man I ever saw—Nathaniel Jones. He said that he would not decide against me on *ex parte* evidence; that he had always found me right, and he believed I was right in this case.

It was on Thursday that they laid the case before the Governor and Warden. Things wore along till Sunday, without any action. On Sunday, I wrote a note, placing it where I knew one of the prisoners would find it. The note was written in a peculiar style, the vowels being all left out, and their places sup-

plied by the consonants which followed them in the alphabet. I had once heard a prisoner speak of this style of writing, but no one had the least idea that I could write it. There were, however, three of McGregor's clique who could write in this way. I knew the prisoner to whom the note was addressed would show it, and I stated that he could settle the difficulty, if he tried, and that I was not the author of it.

This note was the means of throwing them into the most awkward position; and their confusion was worse confounded, on going to the man who had introduced that style of writing into the prison, and who had been pardoned a few days, and was boarding with one of the officers. They went to him for the purpose of proving that I could write in that way. He told them I could not; and that he had taught only three men, and that I was not one of them. They knew not what to think of this. Each one knew himself to be innocent; but every one suspected the others of treachery. But they all united to prove that I had written it; and, on Monday, they sent the note to the Governor, with a written demand that he should order me to be flogged. He might as well have attempted to decipher

the hieroglyphics on the tombs of Egypt, as to read that note without a key—it was past his legal acumen. But he sent over an order for the Warden to investigate the matter.

The Warden was highly incensed at the liberty they took in appealing to the Governor. He went to McGregor, and asked him if he could read the note. He told him that he could not. He then asked him how he knew what was in it, and what he had to complain of. He told the Warden that there was no one but me that would write such a note, and that I was doing all I could to keep up a quarrel and strife among the prisoners.

The Warden told him that, if he could not read the note, he had no fault to find; but, if he could read it, he could write it, and there was no doubt that he had as much hand in it as I had; adding, furthermore, that if he did not get into an overseer's place, and attend strictly to his own business, he would break his cane over his head; and that he would take the prison under his own control, and see if he could not have less difficulty.

McGreggor could not bear this—for, like his master, he would rather “reign in hell

than serve in heaven"—so he appealed to the Governor for redress. But the Governor told him that he would not interfere any farther, and that they must settle the difficulty among themselves.

As soon as the Warden found out that he had been to the Governor again, he was more vexed than ever, and he at once discharged him. McGreggor had crowed before he got out of the woods. He had boasted in the city of Milledgeville that he had at last circumvented all the stratagems of the wily agitator, and that such punishment as I deserved would be inflicted on me. But, alas for the fallacy of all human hopes! then came the day of humiliation for those who had taken the uppermost seats. They were brought down as low as the lowest. McGreggor had allowed them to do as they pleased—to eat in the hospital, and sleep there—and go where they pleased; but now they were put on the same level as the rest. It was a grievous thing to bear, but still more grievous was the mortifying thought that the poisoned chalice which they had intended for me, they were themselves compelled to drain to the very dregs.

CHAPTER X.

THE RELEASE.

THE allied host were confounded at their fall. Their chief was discharged in disgrace; and they had neither means nor spirit for keeping up the war. From this time, they ceased their quarrel with me. All settled down in quiet; and peace once more reigned in the camp. Though I had contended against them single-handed, yet truth was too powerful for their numbers. I felt rejoiced beyond measure, for I had succeeded in my desire: I had escaped from under a tyrant's hand; and the Warden exercised his full authority from that time forward.

As I have said before, this Warden was a very kind man. He allowed the prisoners to see any of their friends, to write when they pleased, and to buy such things to eat as they wished, and could pay for; and, to give the devil his due, I do not think there is a person to be found who is more disposed to exercise his clemency than Governor Andrews; but

where he takes a dislike, or becomes prejudiced, he is inveterate.

I remained about two years after McGregor was discharged, without having the least difficulty. I attended to my own business, as I had done before, and all went along very well. There was nothing that took place during this time that would particularly interest the reader—nothing but the same round, day after day, of working, eating, and sleeping. During the whole of my time in prison, I was faithful and steady to my work; and I think no one will deny this. By bathing and purifying my cell by frequent white-washing, and using all proper means, I enjoyed good health.

But at last, my long confinement, and exile from society, and the monotony of a prison life, began to have their influence on my health. In the summer of '50, I was very much unwell. The disease was decided to be scrofula—and I gradually grew worse during the whole autumn. The doctor had a very bad opinion of my case, from the fact that the most efficient remedies he could think of, produced little or no effect. The day before Christmas, he ordered me to the hospital, di-

recting me to have a free and strengthening diet, with all proper care and attention.

This course was pursued for a month, during which time he frequently examined me; but seeing no change for the better he came to the conclusion that nothing but free exercise in the open air, and such diet as I desired, could restore me to health. He accordingly wrote me a certificate, expressing the above conviction, and recommending me to the Governor's clemency as a confirmed invalid. For this act of justice and mercy he will ever have my deepest gratitude; and I shall ever remember Dr. George Fort with pride, pleasure, and respect.

The Warden was willing to see me go; for I think he was convinced that I could not live much longer if I remained. There was but one man left who was there when I went to prison, and he was on the second sentence, notwithstanding there were one hundred and twenty-seven when I went there. I was quite broken down; and if I did not die in prison it was not likely I should be able to do any more work. I had only nineteen months to remain. Under these circumstances Governor Towns could not withhold my pardon without violating all sense of humanity and justice. So on

the 21st day of January last, he sent my pardon to the prison. It came about dark ; and early next morning having learned the news, I at once prepared to leave my home of nearly six years. My feelings were very agreeable, but not in the least excited. I have seen many so excited that they could scarcely dress themselves.

I got my discharge about twelve o'clock on the 22d, which made five years and five months, lacking five hours, that I had been in prison. I took my leave of the prisoners and departed, leaving many there whom I respect as men of sound principles, and high honor, and for whom I cherish a sincere friendship and respect, especially for the Steward of the hospital. I shall ever feel very grateful towards him for his care of me, and attention while in the hospital, and for other favors. I should be very happy to render any comfort or assistance in my power, or which they may need, to those I left there. Words cannot express what my feelings are toward all those from whom I received even the slightest favors, while in prison. Words are cheap, indeed, but some of them know that I have given expression to my feelings in other ways than words.

I like the Southern people. There are many things which I admire in them. There are many, very many, noble and generous souls in the South—nature's noblemen,—and they are generally a generous and hospitable people. Georgia is a great State, possessing great natural resources. She has a fine climate and pure air, with many noble streams and valuable water-falls. But the blighting influence of Slavery is impeding all her growth and progress. Would she abolish this, and adopt the common school system, in fifty years she would outstrip New York.

I have written these pages for the purpose of correcting the statements which have been differently made at the North and South. I have related the facts as they occurred. I have reflected but little on the subject; but as the circumstances were impressed on my mind in a way not easily to be forgotten, I trust I have given a correct version of them. Such has been my desire. If I have erred, I will cheerfully make the correction, on being informed of the fact.

When I passed out into the city of Milledgeville, I met my old enemy McGreggor. He trembled like an aspen leaf. I told him he was guilty of the basest conduct toward

me. He strove to polish the matter, but I assured him it was useless, and he knew I had always shown him as good a fight as possible.

"Yes," he said, "I am like Pompey. I have met Cæsar, and been defeated."

He wanted to pay my fare in the stage to Gordon, but I refused to accept it. He has become a poor, miserable sot. His heroic adherents were pardoned long before I was, and I have never seen them since. Now, let me ask, why was I compelled to suffer long, long years of imprisonment, misery and woe? Why! It was for doing an act of justice—for doing to another as I would have another do to me—for assisting him to recover possession of his natural rights. I may be told that it "was a violation of a law which is hallowed by age, and revered by the wisest and sagest of our nation." But, I ask, are we to obey all laws, however wrong?—must we crouch to the oppressor's law, however repulsive to our sense of justice? If this doctrine be true, freedom has no substantial foundation, and the strongest despotism would have just as good authority and right to live as the most generous republic;—nay, by the passage of arbitrary and cruel laws, this fair Republic itself might be converted into a despotism—

as it already is towards one portion of its people,—and if it were, it could be sustained by the passage of all laws necessary to its existence, and the truest patriot would be sunk in the rebel.

But I may again be told that “an unconstitutional law is null and void.” Why? “Because that is our guide, our Magna Charta—it is above all law; and beyond or around it we cannot go; and for this reason we cannot be subjected to tyranny.” I reply, that the Constitution itself is the work of man. No mere human work is perfect; but whatever man has done, man must always hold a reserved right over, to alter, correct or annihilate, according to the spirit and power of a higher sense of truth and justice. But natural law is prior, above, and beyond all human law—all constitutions, and cannot be invaded by either. This is the true Magna Charta, which gives to every man a right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

Sir William Blackstone says, in his Commentaries, vol. i, 39–41, “That as man depends absolutely upon his Maker for everything, it is necessary that he should, in all points, conform to his Maker’s will. This will of his Maker is called natural law, and this law of

nature being coeval with mankind, and directed by God himself, is, of course, superior in obligation to any other. It is binding all over the globe, in all countries, and at all times. No human laws *are of any validity, if contrary to this.*"

Lord Chief Justice Hobart also holds, that "even an act of parliament made against natural justice, is void in itself; for all the laws of nature are immutable, and are *leges legum*, the laws to whose authority all others must give place."

"No human laws," says Blackstone, again, in the same work, page 41, "should be suffered to contradict them. To instance, in the case of murder:—this is expressly forbidden by the divine, and demonstrably by the natural law: and from these prohibitions arises the true unlawfulness of this crime. Those human laws that annex a punishment to it, do not at all increase its moral guilt, or super-add any fresh obligation, *in foro conscientiae*, to abstain from its perpetration. Nay, if any human law should enjoin us to commit murder, we are bound to transgress that human law, or else we must offend both the natural and the divine."

Now, all laws prohibiting assistance to be

rendered to slaves, and deterring all from helping them to that which they have a just and "natural right" to, are merely human laws, and "of themselves null and void;" for "the natural law is immutable," and therefore cannot be set aside by any human legislation or enactments whatever.

There is not a more incontestable fact, than that a man has a perfect natural right to his liberty. It is so declared by all expounders of natural law. Our Declaration of Independence clearly establishes this point; and so do all the constitutions of the States. There is nothing so plain and self-evident, as that a man's natural right to his liberty is as clear as his natural right to his life. Then if a man is unlawfully deprived of his liberty, he may lawfully seek to regain it; and if a man may lawfully recover his own liberty, by the common tie of the great human compact, he may assist another for the same purpose; nay, he is bound to do so, whenever circumstance prompts, or occasion offers. But for doing this act, which Blackstone says I was bound to do, inasmuch as we are naturally "bound to transgress" all unrighteous laws, and which no man in his senses can deny the absolute and inalienable right of doing—for breaking

a law which Hobart says was "null and void in itself"—for doing an act of common justice and humanity, for doing this, and this only, I have been subjected to years of disgrace, suffering and ignominy by imprisonment as a common felon! Yet, the people of our whole nation, *in their character of reformers*, would be glad to do this very thing; and indeed they are seeking every opportunity to do it, by restoring foreign prisoners who have been doomed by LAW to exile, or other punishment, to their natural rights; and any American would become a hero in the estimation of the whole country, by abducting one of those prisoners from a stronghold of European tyranny. But *in our character of transgressors*, while we have far transcended all foreign aggression, violence, and wrong, we have made it a penal offense of the blackest dye, to assist one of our own victims to recover his liberty, though upon the validity of his claim to freedom rests our whole national superstructure, our Declaration of Independence, our Revolution, the Constitution of the United States, and the constitutions of all the States. Sweep that away, and this boasted republic is without a shadow of foundation, tossed as it were in mid air, and liable to dash

itself to pieces, by the collision and integral anarchy of all its elements. Who then are the real disunionists? Whose are the parri-
cidal hands that are so unblushingly and daringly lifted against the true spirit of our laws, and all our institutions? Whose, but theirs, who, while they are nursing a dragon beneath the eagle's wing, strive to make it appear that the foul monster is a natural offspring of our gallant bird of Jove; and are not the dragon's teeth sown already,—sown, and swelling for the fatal harvest of blood and death? Let us look to it, that the field is not ready for reaping sooner than we expect!

But, in plain and positive terms, we *must* correct this great national wrong, this great national hypocrisy, which have made us the scorn of the enlightened, and the taunt of the oppressor; we *must* take off all restrictions, and give the great principles of our institutions full scope and sway; we *must not* make war on tyrants abroad, and protect far more monstrous tyranny at home! We *must not* claim for ourselves the largest liberty, and impose upon the very members of our household the most abject and stringent slavery! We *must not* speak the truth and act a lie! The

spirit of humanity, the spirit of the age, demands this; and if we do not yield to the common and universal impetus we shall be soon falling in the rear, and have the mortification to see the Autocrat and the Janizaries far in advance of us.

But to return to the point. What is past is over, and cannot be recalled. Upon my own head, and that of my devoted family, has been visited the full vengeance of the law. The penalty is paid. I alone am responsible for the act; and I leave all to form their own opinions in regard to its merits, or demerits. Should there be a unanimous decision in my favor, it would not strengthen me in the conviction of its justness; or should there be a united opinion against me, it would not shake my mind in the least, or create a doubt, as to the truth of my positions.

At the solicitation of others I have added a few chapters, giving a description of Slavery, as it exists at the South. In this production I make no pretensions to elegance, or beauty of style; but, as Byron says, "What is writ, is *writ*."

I close by soliciting, in the kindest manner, the Southern people to hear, and to remember the words of a great man: "Though State

may league with State, and millions covenant with millions more, to sustain a wrong, they cannot hold it up. Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not go unpunished. Even yet Righteousness exalteth a nation; but Sin is a reproach to any people."

CHAPTER XL

LIFE IN SLAVERY.

LABOR, FOOD AND CLOTHING.

- "Go; let us ask of Constantine
To loose his grasp on Poland's throat,—
And beg the lord of Mahmoud's line
To spare the struggling Suliote!
Will not the scorching answer come
From turbaned Turk, and fiery Russ,
Go; loose your fettered slaves at home;
Then turn and ask the like of us!"
- "O rouse ye ere the storm come forth,—
The gathered wrath of God and man,—
Like that which wasted Egypt's earth
When fire and hail above it ran.
Hear ye no warnings in the air?
Feel ye no earthquake underneath?
Up, up! why will ye slumber where
The sleeper only wakes in death!"
- "Up, now, for Freedom!—not in strife
Like that your sterner fathers saw—
The awful waste of human life—
The glory and the guilt of war!
But break the chain—the yoke remove—
And smite to earth th' oppressor's rod,
By those mild arms of Truth and Love
Made mighty through the Living God!"

" Prone let the shrine of Moloch sink, '
 And leave no traces where it stood ;
 Nor longer let its Idol drink
 His daily cup of human blood !
 But rear another altar there,
 To Truth, and Love, and Mercy given ;
 And Freedom's gift, and Freedom's prayer,
 Shall call an answer down from Heaven !"

IN Hotchkiss' Statute Law of Georgia, page 802, may be found the following : " Persons declared slaves. All negroes, Indians, mulattoes, or mestizoes, who now are, or hereafter shall be, in this province (free Indians in amity with this government, and all negroes, mulattoes, or mestizoes, who now are, or hereafter shall become free, excepted), and all their issue, or offspring, born, or to be born, shall be, and they are hereby declared to be, and remain forever hereafter, absolute slaves, and shall follow the condition of the mother, and shall be deemed, in law, to be chattels personal in the hands of their respective owners, or possessors, and their executors, administrators, and assigns, to all intents and purposes whatsoever."

Thus the empire of the master over his slave is absolute and comprehensive. The slave exists solely for his benefit. He purchases him for that very purpose, and no

other. In order to realize the greatest profit, a master may find it for his interest to treat his slaves well, to clothe them comfortably, feed them plentifully, and allow them as many privileges as possible. But if he thinks otherwise, he adopts an opposite course. In either case he acts only for his own advantage. The question of gain or loss decides his action; for he is governed by a principle of sheer economy. This course is the result of the position he occupies.

All men, in all places, would be governed by the same motives, if placed in his situation. The best of men, the most benevolent, and they who would give their last dollar to relieve distress, would become reconciled to it by habit, and the force of custom and education. In the South there are men of the kindest heart, who regard their fellow-men with the liveliest emotions of sympathy, and who are noble, generous, and high-minded, yet who act and are governed by motives altogether different in relation to their slaves. They have been so educated as to regard these as another class; and in making this distinction they are supported by the laws of the land, the authority of the Church, and by

the whole force of custom and public sentiment.

No words can more tartly describe the ease, nature, and cause of the "change which comes over the spirit of the dreams" of many in regard to Slavery, who once opposed it, than the following lines of Pope :

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As to be hated needs but to be seen ;
But seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

Under that state of things can the Slaveholder get the same view of the subject as they who stand aside, and who have always been instructed differently, may obtain? Why should he give up his property when all his inclinations prompt him to retain it, and all the laws assist and strengthen him to hold it? He knows but little of his own heart, and less of human nature, who says that he would act differently, had he been subjected to the same influences. It is hard to convince a man against his will, and still harder to convince him against his interest. I know but one party, sect, or denomination, who have given up their slaves to keep their morals. When the Society of Friends

passed a rule that no member of the Society should hold slaves, they at once gave them their liberty; and I fear it will be a long time before there is another like circumstance. It is certainly true that it must be a very low and rudimental state of society which can tolerate chattel slavery; and this is precisely the worst feature of the case, that it distorts the vision so that it cannot see a fellow-man in the slave it has created—that it robs a man of his humanity, and then punishes him, as if his misfortune were a crime—that it weakens the powers of reasoning, so that one cannot comprehend the plainest—nay, the universal principles of right and wrong—that it degrades the character of a civilized people into a worse than barbarous condition.

In regard to the law referred to above, I do not hesitate to say that, aside from negro slavery, there cannot be found in the legal code of any people, civilized, barbarous, or savage, one so monstrous as that! It is worse than brutal; for it transforms a human being into a THING, placing him in the hands of a despotic master, to be so held, to all intents and purposes whatsoever. Bad as this is for the slave, it is still worse for the master.

since it is so much better to suffer than to do evil.

Now, I shall endeavor, as truthfully as possible, to sketch the life of the slave from childhood to old age. The young slaves are, like most other children, allowed to do as they like, and to amuse themselves as they please, till they arrive at an age capable of beginning their service. They usually play among the white children, and their first lesson is to obey everything that has a white skin. They are soon made to know that obedience is law and gospel. However diminutive the white child may be, they must comply with every order. Here they learn their first lesson of submission; and at the same time the white child learns his first lesson of oppression. It is surprising to see how soon a small child will find out that he is master, and what ludicrous acts he will commit in playing the infant tyrant. The consequence is, that there is nothing that a white child prefers to a bevy of young slaves; for he is the Napoleon of the gang, and lords it with all the pomp and authority of one who knows that he has absolute sway.

The young slaves generally go naked during a great part of the year, or wear no-

thing but a shirt. They frequently run about in a perfect state of nudity, until ten years of age. They are under a double set of masters. The one will punish when they please; the other, being naturally fond of their children, and having but little or no self-discipline, generally wait till their passions are roused to the highest pitch, and then they beat them without mercy until they are cooled down.

They run of errands, and do such work and jobs about the house as are desired, till they are large enough to go to the field, which generally takes place when they are about ten years of age. After going to the field, the amount of work required will be governed by the character of the master. If he is a kind man, the slave will not be ill-treated, nor imposed upon by being overtasked; but if the slave is so unfortunate as to be in the hands of a miserly and cruel man, he is badly used and overworked.

About the 1st of February, they generally begin to break up the ground for planting. Men, women, boys and girls, are all expected to do the same amount in plowing. They often have as many as thirty plows going at once. As soon as they get the ground broken up, they run the field off into furrows at the

proper distance apart ; and while some drop the corn, or scatter the cotton seed, as the case may be, others throw a furrow over it. This is a much more expeditious mode than covering with a hoe.

The time that intervenes between planting and weeding, is generally devoted to the repairing of fences, and securing the fields against the intrusion of cattle. The corn crop is in general plowed three times, and weeded with a hoe twice. But in a cotton field there is no end to the work as long as you can get among it without breaking its branches.

The hours of work are from light to dark. They take their breakfast before going to work, and have one or two hours at dinner, according to circumstances. They generally get through working the crop about the middle of August. The Southern People are not so good farmers as those of the North. It would astonish a Northerner to see the grass growing in their corn fields, after they have "laid it by." The first rain that comes, the crab grass will spring up thicker than the seven plagues of Egypt, and if they were all converted into locusts they would find it very difficult to destroy. But many say that it is an advantage by keeping the fields from "washing."

About the time the crops are laid by, they pull their fodder. They never cut the stalks as we do at the North, but only pull the blades from the corn. In pulling and curing this they are occupied about a week. They then break up the ground for small seed, and this brings them to the time of picking cotton and harvesting corn.

Picking cotton is a very tedious and laborious process, and everything that can move, or be spared, has to march to the cotton field. This plant will continue to bear as long as the frost keeps off, so that in warm seasons the field will have to be picked over half a dozen times. The picking and ginning of cotton occupies them till the 1st of February, often longer; and this brings them to the putting in of the new crop. Thus, year in and year out, they pursue the same round of labor, till the arrival of old age renders them unable to continue in the fields. They are then put to take charge of the stock, or doing such out-work about the houses as they are able; and in this way they pass their declining years, doing less and less, until, like an old clock, which is quite worn out, they stop altogether.

Their work is regulated by no law, except that which relates to their being worked on

Sunday, and being permitted to work for themselves. In Hotchkiss' State Laws of Georgia, page 770, we find this, "If any person shall, on the Lord's day, commonly called Sunday, employ any slave in any work or labor, every person so offending shall forfeit and pay the sum of ten shillings for every slave he, she, or they, shall so cause to work or labor." On page 810, the law declares "If the owner, or owners, of any slave shall permit such slave, for a consideration or otherwise, to have, hold, and enjoy the privilege of laboring, or otherwise transacting business for him, her, or themselves, except on their own premises, such owner, or owners, shall, for every such weekly offense, forfeit and pay the sum of thirty dollars, except in the cities of Savannah and Augusta, and in the town of Sunbury."

Neither does the law say anything about their food. The usual practice is, to give them half a pound of bacon, and a pound and a half of meal per day. I have known those who were large, strong, and hearty to receive more than this, and many who did not get half as much. Why a man cannot see that it is for his own interest to feed his slaves well, is more than I can comprehend; and yet we know there are many souls too narrow to compre-

hend this, for do we not see here at the North many who ill-treat and starve their cattle?

If there is a pitiful object to be found on earth, it is a poor, miserable, half-fed slave! Those on the rice plantations get no meat at all, from year's end to year's end. They are allowed a peck of rice per week. This food is varied in different States, where corn and bacon are largely raised, and therefore cheap. They are then better fed than where these provisions are scarce, as in those sections where rice, cotton, and sugar are grown. These crops require the hardest labor, and they who work them ought to be the best fed; but it is far from being the case. This is cruel and unjust.

The law makes no provision for their clothing. They who hire slaves are obliged to give them one pair of negro kersey pantaloons, and a jacket of the same, two pairs of cotton pantaloons, two shirts, one pair of shoes, a hat, and a blanket, a-year, and the female dress is in proportion. A good master will allow them this, but many do not, and they often suffer greatly in cold weather. They are allowed no Sunday suit; and they are compelled not only to buy this, if they have it, but often a good part of their other clothing, which they

do by making small articles for sale. All bed and bedding they get in the same way, if they have any; but the most of them have no beds of any kind. They get generally, either by gift or purchase, the cast-off clothes of the whites. In this way, many of the females get articles of bedding, often so as to make up quite a comfortable bed.

They live in cabins, which, being made of logs, are very open and airy. Wood is plenty in most places—so at night they can keep warm. Those who have beds lie on them, and those that have not, build a good fire, and all lie down—and always with the head to the fire. They will wrap their blankets round the head and shoulders, or creep, head foremost, into a bag or sack: for, like the ostrich, they seem to think if the head is covered, they are out of danger.

A sarcastic remark made by John Randolph, truly illustrates the feeling and benevolence of the South, and also the condition of slaves in regard to clothing. A wealthy and Christian lady, whom he was once visiting in Virginia, spent all her eloquence in expatiating on the sufferings of the Greeks, for whom she was then engaged in making up clothing. On going to the door, he saw—what was, indeed,

a common sight—a bevy of about thirty young slaves, nearly naked. He started back, apparently in the greatest horror, while his whole expression wrought itself into the cutting sarcasm—

“Which, like a red-hot rapier, hurt two ways”—

as, in that terrible voice, he exclaimed, “Behold! the Greeks are at your door!”

CHAPTER XII.

PUNISHMENT AND MARRIAGE.

THE punishment of slaves is not defined by law. In the work of Hotchkiss, late referred to, page 770, is the following: "Punishment of masters for abusing slaves. If any overseer, or employer, of a slave, or slaves, shall cruelly treat such slave, or slaves, by unnecessary or excessive whipping, by withholding proper food and sustenance, by requiring greater labor from such slave, or slaves, than he, she, or they, are able to perform, or by not affording proper clothing, whereby the health of such slave, or slaves, may be injured and impaired, or cause, or permit the same to be done, every such owner or employer, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor; and on conviction, shall be punished by fine, or imprisonment in the common jail of the county, or both, at the discretion of the court."

Every one must see, who can see at all, that this law amounts to nothing. How is a slave to prove that he is flogged too much, or fed too little? There is no one to witness his

wrongs. It is nonsense to pass a law for a man's protection, when the very thing he is protected from is not seen by any competent witness, and then compel him to prove it by a third party, who is, presumptively, opposed to his interest, and leagued with his enemy. This law will be just about as serviceable to the slave as that of olden time was to the Salem witches. If one of that unfortunate class was suspected, he was thrown into a pond. If he sank, and thereby took a narrow chance of escape from drowning, he was innocent; but if he floated, he was guilty—and was taken out, only to be hanged. So, guilty or innocent, they, for the most part, had to die. So of the slave: they pass a law to protect him from abuse, and then make another which deprives him of his oath; and thereby of all means to prove that he is abused. Thus the law of protection is completely nullified, and there is no redress.

The slaves are generally held in subjection by the lash. They know very well whom they have to deal with, and how far they can transgress without being called to account. If punishment follows disobedience with unerring certainty, they are cautious about infringing upon orders. But if threatening is often re-

sorted to, they soon discover that it is all wind ; and, inch by inch, they tear away the restraint, till they finally break over all bounds, and arouse the vengeance of their master, who inflicts on them severe and summary punishment, which throws them back into order and obedience.

The best managers of slaves are they who whip the least. They carry a firm, steady, and decided hand, never giving an order unless it is to be executed. They speak in a firm and friendly manner, and sometimes joke with them. Such overseers and masters the slaves like. But if you wish to find a man whom the slaves hate, select one who is fickle and suspicious,—a Nero one day, and a lamb the next; or one who will hide around the fence, or behind the hedges, ditches, trees and stumps, to watch them; or one who is forever ordering, blustering, finding fault and threatening. Each and all of these characters they despise, hate, and detest.

Their punishment is always to be measured by the disposition, or sense of humanity, in their owners. When they are in the hands of cruel and unscrupulous men, what they suffer is awful to think of! I once heard the cracking of a whip, and the screeches of a female,

at the distance of a mile, for half an hour, without ceasing! But kind men will neither inflict nor allow others to inflict severe punishment, except in extreme cases. Many will not keep such slaves as require to be whipped, but sell them. Yet this is wrong; for they get very cruelly treated by being sold to bad men. It is almost incredible, and yet it is true, that there are many who prefer vicious slaves, for the pleasure of breaking them down, as one would a horse.

Mankind are much the same in all parts of the world. Kindness will always be reciprocated, and inhumanity retaliated. If you wish men to do their duty, obey orders, and accomplish the most work with the least expense and difficulty; treat them like men. Clothe them well, give them a plenty to eat and drink; and whatever punishment is adopted, let it follow disobedience without fail. In the army, navy, prisons, or among slaves, this is the only course that ever can succeed.

Law and marriage have no necessary connection among the slaves. Their marriages are contracted at any age or time which they prefer; and most of them have little idea of the sacredness or obligations of such a contract.

The circumstances under which they have always been led to view it, have naturally induced an obtuseness in regard to its moral character. When two have come to an agreement of marriage, the man generally asks the permission of both their owners; though there are thousands who marry otherwise, or live together without any ceremony. If both are willing there is no farther difficulty; but if either objects, it cannot be carried into execution. It matters not how strong may be their love, or how endearing their affection, if, as is often the case, the families are at variance, or one dislikes the slave of the other, one or both will put their veto on the subject.

But if there is no objection, the marriage will be celebrated among themselves with great glee and hilarity. It is the common practice to arrange things so that the nuptials can be celebrated on Saturday night. They are great adepts at imitation; and so far as their means will allow, they follow the course practiced among the whites. They choose a bridesmaid and bridegroom, and invite their companions to partake of their joy. The bride cleans out her cabin, selects her best articles of dress, prepares the best supper she can command, and waits the arrival of her intend-

ed. He generally arrives in company with the priest, who is an elderly negro, to whom they look with much respect. He is commonly a member of some church. As they have no time to spare, they at once proceed to have the knot tied. They take their places and the ceremony proceeds; and though each may have one or two partners living, they again respond to the obligation to love and to cherish each other, until death shall part them. And though the priest himself may have two or three wives living, he pronounces the binding clause—"What God hath joined together let not man put asunder,"—it should be, let not masters put asunder.

After the priest has given them an exhortation in his homely way, he closes with a prayer. Though he exhorts them always to abide together, he well knows they are liable to be separated the next day. And notwithstanding both of their masters have given their consent to the union, should either become dissatisfied, or should there be a removal of either to an inconvenient distance, there must be a separation, unless, as is sometimes the case, where there is a strong attachment, and the slaves are particular favorites, they can persuade their masters to sell

them. But where this is not the case, they often have several partners living at the same time ; for there is no divorce among slaves—their own inclination—their master's will—or the intervention of space—being the only laws of divorce recognized among them. I have known only one case of recognized divorce, which was as follows. A middle-aged Negro by the name of Jake was asked how many wives he had married.

“ I’s e had five,” he answered.

“ What ! are they all dead ?”

“ No ; I reckon they’s all ’live.”

“ Have you got a divorce from them ?”

“ I has that.”

“ And how, I pray ?”

“ Why, you see, when I’s e sold, I spec dey put it in de bill of sale ; for I never sees any more of Dina after that.”

“ Well, Jake, you are popular among de women to get so many wives.”

“ Yes, I is ; but I’s e more pop’lar ’mong de men, kase they like me so well, they keep buyin me, and so gets all my wives away.”

A thought never crosses the slave’s mind of being guilty of any sin or wrong, by pursuing such a course ; and I think there can be but little blame laid to his door. If a Church

decides that it is not only not wrong, but the duty of a slave to marry again, where a separation takes place,* how is it to be expected that the slave should see, or feel, any impropriety in it? The case of Jake illustrates the condition of a large majority of the slaves. How can it be expected that sound morals can exist among any people where such a state of things is upheld? Can purity be clothed with its own proper sanctity in any society where early and subsequent impressions are made and confirmed by precepts and examples like the above? Can there be any such thing as chastity in a community where the whole course of life is a mighty temptation against it, where there are not only a thousand corrupting influences, but often strong compulsion, and an inexorable decree to humble it in the dust; where woman is made a chattel in the hands of her owner, and is by law declared to be so, "to all constructions, intents, and purposes, whatsoever!" Let free women think of this; and let no tongue defend female slavery, that would not also defend prostitution, rape, and compulsory INCEST.

It is as often the case as not, that those who

* It was lately so decided by the Baptist Convention of Kentucky.

are married live at such a distance from their wives, that it is impossible for them to see them oftener than once a-week. After their Saturday's work is done, they get a pass to go to their "wife's house." They are allowed to remain till Monday morning; and if the distance is from ten to twenty miles, they are allowed from sunrise till three hours after, to return in, according to the disposition of their owners. Sometimes their attachment is very strong, and they live happily together; and they are generally very fond of their children. Some owners will not separate families, and often buy a husband or wife to prevent this. But the condition of most slaves is such that they can be with their families but a very little; and their marriage is considered so slight a matter, that all who desire it, or become tired of their companions, cast off the obligation as they would an old shoe. And how often is it the case that those who desire to do well, and treat their families with all kindness, find it impossible to do so, from the fact of their being too widely separated? How can any man do by his family as he would like, who lives at the distance of ten or twenty miles, with no means of going back and forth but on foot, and no time for visits

but between Saturday night and Monday morning? Is it possible for any man to fulfill the duties which devolve upon the head of a family, and live in such a manner? Can he cherish his wife in sickness and in health? Can he instruct his children in what is most essential to their welfare? Can he provide for the comfort and enjoyment of his family? Can he protect them from insult, or shield them from injury? Every one must see the utter impossibility of his discharging the duties contemplated by marriage.

CHAPTER XIII.

SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS RESTRAINT.

IN order to keep the slaves confined upon the plantation, and to prevent their meeting in bodies, the law has established a patrol. At page 813 of the work before quoted, we find this passage: "And as it is absolutely necessary to the safety of this province, that all due care be taken to restrain the wandering and meeting of Negroes, and other slaves, at all times, and more especially on Saturday nights, Sundays and other holidays, and their using and keeping mischievous and dangerous weapons, or using and keeping drums, horns or other loud instruments, which may call together, or give sign or notice to one another, of their wicked designs and intentions, and that all masters, owners and others, may be enjoined diligently and carefully to prevent the same: Be it enacted, that it shall be lawful for any person, whomsoever, to apprehend and take up any Negro, or other slave, that shall be found out of the plantation of his or their master or owner, at any time, especially

on Saturday nights, Sundays, or other holidays, not being on lawful business, and with a ticket from their masters, or not having a white person with them; and said slave or slaves, met or found out of the plantation of his or their master or mistress, though with a ticket, if he or they be armed with such offensive weapons aforesaid, him or them to disarm, take up and whip; and whatsoever master, owner or overseer, shall permit or suffer his or their slave or slaves, at any time hereafter, to beat drums, blow horns, or other loud instruments; whoever shall suffer any public meeting or feasting of strange slaves in their plantation shall forfeit thirty shillings sterling for every such offense, upon conviction or proof as aforesaid."

The Captain of the patrol is appointed by the Justice of the Peace; and they are established in every militia district. The Captain chooses such men to assist him as he thinks proper, and he has power to call them out whenever he pleases. The law allows the patrol to go where they choose,—into any house, cabin, out-houses, or plantation, except those occupied by the Whites. They usually ride in their nightly rounds; and to all the slaves they catch without a pass, which is a writ-

ten permission to go and come, they give such punishment as they please to inflict, though the law says they shall not exceed twenty lashes.

If a slave is caught without a pass no one can protect him, not even his master. This law gives the patrol opportunities of punishing such slaves as they have a hatred against, if they can possibly catch them. Or should they have an ill feeling against the master, they will sometimes vent it upon the poor defenseless slaves.

Those that are sly and cautious are the very ones they try the most to catch. Nothing pleases them better than to catch one that is smart and active, and always on the alert. Though he is doing no harm, they will try for months to get hold of him. They often find them in the cabins, courting their sweethearts. But one thus situated is like the Frenchman's flea, when you go to lay hold of him he is not there. He has vanished through some unseen aperture, or out of the window. This discomfiture mortifies the patrol, and they will then lay all sorts of plans and traps to catch him, and if they succeed they are sure to pay him up for lost time.

But the law does not have the effect that

was intended. It does not prevent their night-walking to any great extent, for as the patrol grow more vigilant, they grow more cautious; and by taking the woods, and cutting across the fields, and going along the by-paths, they accomplish their ends, without being caught. As the night season is their only time for wandering about, they have to adopt some plan to keep from getting lost. They make the stars their guide, and by practice are soon able to determine the location of all the surrounding plantations, to tell the principal points of the compass, and to designate the situation of any place they have been to, though probably they could not tell the North Star from one of the pointers. Men and women like to stroll about at night. It seems to be one of their greatest pleasures; and with the exception of Sunday, it is probably their greatest. They will travel a long way, and do with but little sleep, that they may indulge in this propensity.

Once upon a time, when I was on the patrol, we walked up silently to a cabin, opened the door, and went in. There we found an old woman and her daughter, in earnest conversation with two other females. They had come a long distance to have a reg-

ular confab. The slaves are great talkers. They have two families to talk about; and they must tell all the hopes, joys, and sorrows of each. We went in so suddenly upon them they were taken by surprise. The two visitors were so frightened that they really turned pale; and this change of countenance, from the usual dark color to a frightfully livid hue, is much greater than any similar change in a white person.

The captain ordered them out; and as they were going through the yard, I was in the rear, and they fell back, and spoke to me in an under tone, to beg them off from a whipping. I was slightly acquainted with them; and it was for this reason, doubtless, that they applied to me; for they did not know the others. Poor creatures! they were only indulging in a little social chat, and were doing no wrong! They had already been nearly frightened out of their wits; so I told the captain that as they were women, and it was the first time we had caught them, we ought to let them off. He made them promise to be more careful for the future. They thanked him heartily, and scampered for home with all possible expedition.

The law makes no provision for the slave's

moral or religious culture, but one against it, at page 840 of Hotchkiss' Digest—"No person of color, whether free or slave, shall be allowed to preach, to exhort, or join in any religious exercise, with any persons of color, whether free or slaves, there being more than seven persons present. They shall first obtain a written certificate from three ordained ministers of the Gospel, of their own order, in which certificate shall be set forth the good moral character of the applicant, his pious deportment, and his ability to teach the Gospel, having a due respect to the character of those persons to whom he is to be licensed to preach; such ministers to be members of the Conference, Presbytery, Synod, or Association, to which the churches belong, in which said colored preacher may be licensed to preach, and also the written permission of the Justices of the Inferior Court of the County, and in counties in which the county town is incorporated, in addition they are to get the permission of the Mayor, or chief officers, or commissioners of such incorporation, such license not to be for a longer time than six months, and to be recoverable at any time by the persons granting it."

Suppose the Disciple of Christ should be so

lucky as to pass the fiery ordeäl, and get the certificate, and liberty to preach, of these three Ministers, and five Justices of the Inferior Court, and also the Mayor, chief officers, and the Commissioners—suppose he gets all these; yet how is he going to “teach the Gospel with ability,” after he has been brought up under the following law, page 772 of the same work: “If any person shall teach any slave, negro, or free person of color, to read, or write, with written or printed characters, or shall procure, suffer, or permit, a slave, negro, or free person of color, to transact business for him in writing, such person, so offending, shall be punished by fine or imprisonment in the common jail of the county, or both, at the discretion of the Court.”

I have heard it said that two rays of heat can be thrown in such an angle as to produce cold, and that two rays of light can be so thrown together as to produce darkness; but I never before knew, or heard, that a man could teach the Gospel with ability who could not read! We are told that we must “search the Scriptures; for they are they which testify of me.” What has the poor Indian done that he must be deprived of preaching, and not allowed to read, or write? The law is

positive, and puts in no saving clause. It appears that Pope's words are not only true, but these legislators are determined to keep them so—

“Lo, the poor Indian, whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind,
Whose soul proud Science never taught to stray,
Far as the solar walk, or milky way.”

This law is not only unjust, but stands point blank against the Constitution of Georgia. In this Instrument, Article 4th, Section 10th, we find, “No person within this State shall, upon any pretense, be deprived of the inestimable privilege of worshiping God, in a manner agreeable to his own conscience.”

The Constitution makes no distinction of class or color. Now the colored people, including Indians, free blacks and slaves, are “persons;” and it is “agreeable” for them to worship God without going to all the difficulty of getting the above certificate. A colored minister is as much worshiping God while preaching the Gospel, as his hearers are by listening. Suppose a law should be passed prohibiting white men from preaching, unless under the above restrictions, how long would they submit to it? It must be evident to all,

that under the above laws, the religion of the slave amounts to but little. He is not allowed to read; the moral precepts of the Bible are not explained, and laid before him in such a way that his mind can grasp them. They are ignorant and undisciplined as a race; and the very book they ought to read, is as great a mystery to them as a Delphian Oracle.

They have but few privileges for Divine Service, and, as a general thing, less inclination; but they are frequently brought to see the error of their ways, and are sometimes wrought up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, as most ignorant people are, under the same circumstances. They will shout, and scream, fall down, and roll about; and they often seem quite deranged for a day or two. At such times they are accused of acting "possum," and are frequently whipped. At times they appear to be perfectly subdued; and then again they fall back into their old habits. As their religion is generally of an impulsive and intermittent character, so their conduct alternates between good and bad. There are some, however, who try to follow the path of virtue, and obey the precepts of the Bible as well as they know how. But the

greater part of them are as vicious and immoral as their ignorance and degraded condition can make them.

A slave can have but little respect for religion, when he sees those who profess to be governed by its benign influences, guilty of the most cruel and unjust treatment toward himself and his brethren. The slaves are not admitted into a Church unless they have a good moral character ; but it is not considered immoral for them to have several wives at the same time ; nor are they ever refused admission on that account.

Some are in the habit of calling their slaves in during family service. An anecdote is told of John Randolph, which illustrates the impulsiveness of many of the Southern people. I had it from the Rev. F. Jacobs, Professor of Mathematics, in Oglethorp College, Georgia. Randolph was in the habit of praying and preaching to his negroes. Just after he had one day concluded this exercise, he asked John, an old man of his, how he liked his preaching.

"You preach bery fine, elegant — massa John!" he replied—"but I don't tink you preach so fine as Massa Jones!"

"You G—d d—d rascal," retorted the mas-

ter, "get out of the house! If I can't preach better than that d——d old fool, I'll never preach again!" The person referred to—"Massa Jones"—was an ignorant old fellow, who could talk about nothing from morning till night; and every one knows that Randolph prided himself much on his learning; and therein lay the point.

The slaves are shrewd enough to see that when they are especially preached to, the texts happen to be selected from such portions of the Bible as may instruct them to obey their masters. From this has arisen the saying among slaves, that there is one part of the Bible for white folks, and another part for negroes. The master, not unfrequently, is, by his slaves, retorted upon, in a sly way, for hypocrisy, as evinced by his conduct towards them. One of these professors once called his slave when he was eating his dinner, and asked him why he was taking so much time.

"Why you see, Massa, I was goin' by de Bible."

"How so?" inquired the master.

"Why, didn't you read lass' night, dat whatever thy hands find to do, do it with all thy might?"

The master saw that Tony had him, and

made no reply. They then started to the field to work; but along towards night Tony got idle, and the master, thinking to "get his money back again," said: "Tony, you are not going by the Bible now."

"Yes, I is;" returned the slave, with a knowing look.

"How is that?"

"Didn't you read toder night, that we mustn't haste to get rich, nor lay up riches on earth?"

"Well, well, Tony; that will do. Now hull out to work!"

At another time when a slave had returned from meeting, his master asked him how he liked the sermon.

"I don't like such sarmons at all, Massa, kase dey aint de trufe!"

"What, you rascal; you don't accuse the Minister of lying, do you?"

"I don't like to do dat, Massa; but he did'nt preach de trufe to-day, dat much is *sartin*."

"Well, let us hear how it is?"

Here the slave began to shy off, at a respectful distance, as he answered: "He say I can't sarve two massas—dat I would love de one, an' hate de other! Now, I serve

you an' Massa Ben all my life; and 'e Lord knows I hate you bofe."

Licentiousness is at its highest tide among the slaves of the South. Amalgamation, adultery, fornication, and incest, exist to a deplorable extent. There are no restraints whatever upon these crimes; and I have never heard of their ever being reproved for the commission of them. The female slave has no inducement to be chaste—nay, she can have but a very dim and imperfect idea of what female purity is; for she has been accustomed to see a promiscuous cohabitation indulged in; and her person is the only means by which she can gain favors, purchase presents, or buy indulgences of any kind. For such a course no finger of scorn is pointed at her. There is no society to disgrace, and none to ridicule her. To be the favorite of her master, his son, the overseer, or any white man—or even to be the mistress of a driver, is an honor; and one so fortunate as she is considered, occupies a post of distinction, and preferment.

But even without these monstrous abuses, where marriage is only a temporary relation, which can be dissolved by the master's will, or at their own pleasure, it must be evident

to all, that continence cannot exist, unless by miracle. Every one can imagine the unprotected condition of a young female who is held in bondage. Every one must know that the flattery, notice, and attention which she finds paid to her, by one she has always been taught to look upon as her superior, would most naturally win her favors. And should advances be made to her which are repugnant to her wishes, in many cases she finds it impossible to resist those who solicit her regards.

I know I may be told that she can appeal to her master or mistress for protection. I am aware of this; and I have no doubt it is often done, and the assistance cheerfully rendered. But in case he who makes these advances is of high standing, or a member of the family; must she not dread the consequences of exposing him? And to whom can she appeal, when the offender is her master himself? This is an inevitable result of slavery. The sage legislators who made woman a chattel never expected she should preserve her virtue—if they did, they must have been devoid of common sense—nay, more; by making it criminal, as in all instances they have done, for a colored woman to lift her

hand against a white man, they seem to have pointed every law, with a positive aim, to this very result! How can a chattel be brought under any kind of moral obligation? And, if chattel slaves do lose all sense of right, it is no more than they have done who have brought them into that condition—it is no more than they do, who still forcibly retain them in it!—The real guilt lies at the door of those who have knotted together these dark and deadly circumstances, into the web of iniquity we now behold—and not only are these to be condemned, but they who continue—and they who assist in upholding the wrong—though it be but in the slightest manner—and even negatively.

Does not this law of chattelhood place female virtue in the hands of a man, giving him absolute power over her, without any of those safeguards, or restraints, which produce shame from detection, and the fear of punishment and disgrace—nay, more; when the master is the suitor, she can never have any choice in the matter.

It is one of the strongest impulses of our nature to adapt ourselves to surrounding circumstances, so that we may be comfortable as the condition of things will allow. The con-

sequence is, that the female, when she finds herself attaining the age of womanhood, being naturally fond of display, wishing to make as good an appearance as possible, and seeing others violate the laws of virtue, which she is, in fact, almost, if not wholly unconscious of, it would be strange indeed, if she did not follow in the beaten path, in order to obtain such presents, dress, and ornaments, as her favors will gain. That this is so, we see in the multiplying evidences of amalgamation, which are filling the whole South with a mixed race, where every shade of color is represented between the jet black of the African and Anglo-Saxon whiteness; and yet all these, following the condition of the mother, are slaves. This will increase rapidly from year to year; for the brightest mulattoes, or the lightest quadroons, are singled out for mistresses; and thus the slave population must undergo a rapid whitening—making it still more atrocious to hold them in bonds—not, indeed, because they are white, but because they are our own kith and kin—the very children and brethren of the enslaver!

There are those at the South, who deplore this awful result of slavery, feeling that it is one of the worst features of the system. But

this is happy for the slave, and must eventually be a means of restoring his liberty, for with the color they will have more of the character of the whites; and as learning increases and light spreads farther and farther, they may have intelligence and force of character enough to make their color a ticket of manumission; yet none the less wrong and monstrous is the wickedness by which this happy change may be effected.

There is nothing that will rouse the indignation of the Southern people sooner, than to witness the slavery, or bondage, or oppression of one who is, confessedly, a white man; yet there are thousands of their slaves who are white as their own wives and daughters! Is not this a burning proof that any one can be held as a slave if he is born so, though there may be nothing but the pure Anglo-Saxon blood in his veins. But will not the public sentiment itself come to act on this question, when intelligence and moral consciousness shall be more refined than they are?

The Southern people are brave and generous, and ever ready to defend the cause of liberty, so far as the Whites are concerned. They took the most lively interest in the Hungarian cause. Their hearts bled when they

heard that they had been scattered like sheep before the Austrian wolves, and compelled to take to the mountain fastnesses, to the wilderness, and to voluntary exile. They mourned over the fate of Poland. They grieved to see her crushed, and their souls burned to hear how

“Freedom shrieked when Kosciusko fell!”

They were deeply interested in the fate of Greece, and would have poured out their thousands to assist her in the struggle for liberty. But here at home—at their own doors, and around their own firesides, are those who are as white as any of the Hungarians, Poles, or Greeks; yet they have no feeling for them; for they are withholding the very right—the very freedom—they are so ready to bestow on others! When will men learn to be consistent? No wonder that consistency has been termed “a jewel!”

If a free man cannot be made a slave because he is white, how white must a slave become before he is free? There are thousands now, who if the contest were to be decided by color, would become masters, and their masters slaves. Duels have been fought and blood has been spilt by those who lay claim

to the cognomen of "gentlemen," in order to settle disputes concerning which was the rightful claimant of some very slightly tinged white slave's affections. I have frequently been embarrassed on entering houses, by the difficulty of distinguishing the servant from her mistress, in cases where the white servants are well-dressed; and one unacquainted with the family would often be puzzled to know, at first sight, which is the mistress.

I remember an instance of the kind, which occasioned great chagrin and mortification to all parties concerned. Several young men were spending an afternoon with some young ladies, and one of them was unacquainted with the family. Shortly after he arrived, a walk being proposed, he very gallantly marched up to one of the servants, and asked her if she would do him the honor to accept his company.

It is not unfrequently the case that men live with their slaves, and rear up large families, without a thought of marriage; and I have no hesitation in saying that a large portion of the bachelors of the Southern States have remained so, by the power which they have over their female slaves. A great many do not treat their own slave children as they

do others, but with many the parental tie makes no difference ; for all natural right is obliterated by this remorseless evil.

There are many, both in the South and at the North, who are always harping about Negroes living on an equality with the Whites, asking how abolitionists would like to eat, ride, associate, or walk the streets arm in arm with them. "They who live in glass houses had better not throw stones at their neighbors' windows ;" and they who are not conversant with things as they exist at the South, had better take a trip there, and they will be at no loss to discover that the two races have a more intimate association than any of the above.

CHAPTER XIV.

THEFT—PROFANE SWEARING.

A GREAT portion of the slaves are the most arrant liars, and the most abominable thieves ; and this charge is often brought against them by their masters as a proof of their innate depravity. But there are a great many palliations of these offenses. In the first place, their masters often speak falsely to them, and deceive them in various ways. I have often heard masters boast of the deceptions, stratagems and traps by which they have caught a runaway, or detected a thief. In the second place, they have but little except what they do steal ; for their masters are the consumers of all their earnings, except a bare subsistence. Is it wonderful that they should retaliate on their oppressors ?

That they do act from this spirit, and with a consciousness of the wrongs they suffer, is shown from the fact that they are not half so apt to lie to, or about their brother slaves, as to their owners, overseers and other white people. They are not more apt to betray

their companions than we are. They are often whipped most unmercifully to compel them to betray their plots and plans. They will lie for themselves; they lie for one another, but they will resort to every form of hypocrisy and artifice in order to deceive their masters; and if they succeed, as they often do, they rejoice and boast of it as one of the smartest tricks. At such times, they exult in having paid up some old score, by which they had been entrapped or inveigled by their masters.

"It is astonishing," say the masters, "what rascals they are! The best of them will steal with the adroitness of foxes. Everything must be kept under lock and key, for watch them as long as you will, it is all to no purpose; and the more they are flogged for it, the more they will steal." But, gentle masters, did you ever think how white men would behave if they were thus degraded—if all restraint of character, morality, honor and religion were taken off? And did you never think how far worse crimes than those of which you complain, you have established by law, and sustain by law, the force of custom, and public opinion? But if the slaves should ever get the upper hand, and enact a code of

laws investing theft and falsehood with their highest legal sanction, and throwing around their perpetrators the strongest protection, would not these crimes become at the least as reputable as those which you practice and sustain,—manstealing, woman-whipping, adultery and incest? Possibly, you never took this view of the case!

The slaves possess a great deal of cunning. This is the most useful weapon they can wield. It is truly wonderful to see the dexterity with which they can parry the attempts of those who try to circumvent them. By long practice they can detect the disposition and drift of those who wish to foil them, for every word, look, action, or glance, becomes legible to them.

I will here relate an incident which illustrates both their craftiness and their knowledge of human nature. One of my neighbors had a slave by the name of Big George. There was no match for him. He seemed to bid defiance to all to catch him in stealing. At last he got so bold as to take a fine Berkshire pig, such as were then selling at \$10 per head. The pigs were in a pen but a short distance from the house, in full sight of the whole white family, and about thirty slaves.

Yet, he killed, dressed, cooked, and partly ate the pig, before any one knew that it was gone.

As soon as it was missed, the man who had charge of them reported the loss to his master; and after looking about the pen, and reflecting on the matter, they came to the conclusion that Big George had stolen it. They took the most decisive steps to recover it, and on going to his cabin they found it locked. They went to him and demanded his key, telling him what was suspected. With well feigned astonishment, and the most perfect coolness, he said, "W-h-a-t!" He could not have appeared more surprised if a thunderbolt had fallen from a cloudless sky and broken at his feet. He appeared to make all possible haste to find the key; and after searching a long time, during which he was determining what course to pursue, though he had nothing to do but to put his hand in his pocket and pull out the key, he told them he had given it to another slave who had gone to the field, and that he would go and get it. By this means he hoped they would defer their searching till night, and by that time he would have it hid.

But they told him they would break down the door. As soon as he heard this, he ran

and got a heavy piece of timber, to burst it open. In this he had a double design. He thought if he could display sufficient anxiety and readiness to help them, and a perfect indifference about the destruction of his own property, that he might so impress them with his innocence, that they would desist; or, if they should go on, and find the pig, they would not think him such a fool as to be so ready to convict himself. He came very near realizing his first object, as the story will show.

He made all haste to break down his own door. When they got inside, they found his box locked. Here again was the same difficulty. The key of this, also, was in the field. They told him that they must have it open. He ran for the axe to break it open with; and all this time he was declaring, "They would soon see if he had de pig—dey would find out deir mistake after ruining all his things."

While he was gone, a strong doubt in regard to his guilt was expressed by one of the party; but the overseer said it was best to be certain, and into the box they went, notwithstanding this caution—and lo! there lay the well-browned Berkshire, not quite so large as life, for it had shrunk some in the roasting, and was minus a quarter. They asked George

what that was. He ran up to the box in haste, and starting back, threw up both hands, and delivered himself of the following speech: "Good stars an' wonders! dey is de meanest niggers on dis plantation I eber seed! Dey lie; dey cheat; dey steal de Berkshire; dey kill him; dey put him in my box, an' den go tell massa I done it, jess to get me whipped! Dey all clogged agin me, kase dey mad wid me! I knows nothing about de pig! I neber seed him 'fore!"

I laugh while I am writing this, to think of his ludicrous gestures, and the deep earnestness he showed in making his defense, though it was full eight years ago. But the sequel was no laughing matter. It was too late for George to shuffle out of the scrape. He was sentenced to receive a hundred lashes; but even to the last, he never altered his assertion. All the time they were putting it on, he continued to declare, "I neber seed de Berkshire 'fore!"

The slaves are much addicted to profane swearing—and, in fact, almost all of the southern people are, through the influence of the slaves: but still they think themselves perfectly innocent. This is another instance of the power of custom, and the force of edu-

cation. They commit the worst of oaths in their common exclamations of wonder, surprise, admiration, or joy. Instead of saying: "My stars!" "Wonderful!" or even, "Good Lord!" they say, "Good God Almighty!" "Jesus Christ!" and they dwell on each word for about half a minute, so that it appears to one not accustomed to hear them, as if they were trying to see how horribly they could swear. They learn this of the slaves, and grow up without a thought of its being otherwise than innocent. Members of churches think no more of using such expressions than they would of saying, "My stars!"

But, aside from these expressions, the slaves are much addicted to swearing, both male and female, young and old; and I do not see how it can be otherwise—for those who occupy the same ground will always sink to the same level. Let any set of men, or any nation, be subjected to the same condition that Africa has for the last two thousand years, and they will sink to the same degraded position. We hear instances, where Americans have been enslaved in Africa, and, in the short space of one year, they have forgotten every word of the English language: so true it is that "the moment man is made a slave, it takes half his worth away."

CHAPTER XV.

ESCAPE—AUCTION SALES.

THERE are many slaves that run away, in all Slave States, and for all kind's of objects: some to get rid of work, some to escape punishment, some for ill treatment, and others to gain their liberty. There are trained dogs in all the Slave States, which are kept on purpose to track slaves who run away. They never allow these dogs to track anything else but negroes.

The scenes which often take place on these occasions are heart-rending. The poor fugitive will run till he is nearly dead, and then take to a tree or the fence; and when the dogs come up, they will be like so many wolves, so fierce are they to bite and tear the slave's flesh. When the men arrive, they order the slave to come down to the ground, and they let one or two of the best dogs bite him—but sometimes, when several of them are fierce, they tear him half to pieces, before they can be taken off. The next thing is to whip him, to make him tell who his owner is. If his

master lives out of the county, they then take him to jail, and deliver him to the jailer. The jailer whips him as often as he pleases; and, as he gets one dollar for each flogging, he generally is not slow to avail himself of his privilege. The law allows him $18\frac{3}{4}$ cents per day for feeding—that is to give him one quart of meal, or rice, per day.

When his owner comes after him he generally whips him; and when he gets home, he gives him another; so he gets plenty of whippings from all hands he falls into.

The slave dares not resist any white man, no matter how much abused he may be; and if he is tortured with the most refined cruelty, it makes no difference; if he resists, he does it at his peril.

The following is the law upon this subject. "If any slave shall presume to strike any white person, such slave, upon trial, and conviction before the Justice, or Justices, according to the direction of this Act, shall, for the first offense, suffer such punishment as the Justice, or Justices, shall in his, or their discretion, think fit, not extending to life, or limb; and for the second offense, suffer death; but in case any such slave shall grievously wound, or bruise any white person, though it

shall be only the first offense, such slave shall suffer death."

Every one can see how likely such a law is to be abused; for if there is in the white man a very strong spirit of combativeness, he will first provoke the slave; and then if he makes any considerable resistance, kill him, which he will be the more likely to do if he has any spite, malignity, or natural inclination to kill, in his character; and there are many engaged as slave drivers, and slave catchers, who have all these. I do not know that slaves can be kept in subjection, unless there is great power placed in the master's hands;—but is not this dehumanizing necessity—dehumanizing on both sides—one of the strongest possible arguments against it? And how inconsistent, as well as unjust, is the whole system, we can see, by looking at the following fact. The slave, a poor, ignorant, undisciplined, and rudimental being, is expected to have all the forbearance on his side, while all the provocation, and abuse, come from the other. Is this right; is it honorable; is it humane? There is such a contemptible meanness in trampling on weakness, that it is strange it does not strike them in that light. The very dog will not attack. or a dog

smaller than himself; and even when attacked by some pugilistic, but weaker brother, he repels the assault with a quiet dignity, that would feel itself less insulted by enduring the puny insolence, than by stooping to resent it. By all civilized nations it is considered both dishonorable, and mean, to insult or ill-treat a captive, or to strike the weak and defenseless—especially if they be women. But here are gentlemen—gentlemen who, in all other respects, have the highest and the finest sense of honor, indulging in worse than savage treatment of the helpless, and doing acts which a Man would despise himself for committing. The relation of master and slave makes no difference in this view of the case. One party is strong; and the other is weak. One is armed, and well clad; the other has nothing but his bare, and bleeding, and scarry breast, to shelter the quick heart which is now throbbing with the wildest emotions—now sinking like a stone with the deadliest sickness of fear! I will say nothing of the gentleman—but I say whoever has the magnanimity and self-respect of a common man—nay, of the lowest and meanest man aside from slavery, would no more strike that bleeding, prostrate, and quivering wretch,

than he would pilfer pennies from a starving beggar. And supposing the slave were woman—woman writhing under the torturing lash—woman chased by blood-hounds! Is it not too horrible to think upon, and are there any words to make it appear in all its true savageness—so loathsome that common humanity—common decency—sickens at the thought! There are none. Thus truly and certainly does he who chattelizes man, in the worst, and most deplorable sense of the phrase, UNMAN HIMSELF.

The sale of slaves is like that of any other property. They are bought and sold at any and all times. They are levied upon, and sold at auction, singly, or “in lots to suit purchasers,” in the same manner as anything else. But of all heart-rending scenes I ever witnessed, the sales of some families whose master had died, were the most terrible! There they were all brought to the block, in the Court House yard of Thomaston. They stood by families. Some were old enough to have grandchildren, who had lived all the time on the same plantation. But that day was their last meeting as a family! That day was to sever every link of union between them—paternity—maternity—fraternal ties—

and all the endearments of familiar affection and love, were laid on the block, to be sold to the highest bidder; and when the hammer fell the sound smote like a death-blow through every heart! Cowper has truly said, that they were

“Denied, though sought with tears, the sad relief
That misery loves, the fellowship of grief.”

And he might have added that it was sought with cries, prayers, and lamentations.

You could see them running with frantic cries, entreating every one whom they thought they could impress, to buy them and their families. They would stand clasped in each other's arms, giving vent to floods of tears, and incessant cries! They seemed to feel the painful reality of separation, as if that were their last embrace.

As soon as the sale commenced, and one of a family was struck off, each other member of the family would run in haste, and with cries, sobs, and prayers, beg that he would buy the whole family; nor would they leave him until an answer of some kind had been extorted. If in their favor, they would seem to burst their souls with gratitude, to shower it upon the promised purchaser. But if in the

negative, their cries and sobs would ring in the ears of all; and the torrent of sighs and groans would burst out from their tortured bosoms, with the deepest anguish and despair.

As soon as they see one struck off, and find that the purchaser will take no more, they all cry out: "One is gone!" "Oh! one is gone!" with the most woful looks and gestures that could be conceived.

They are all, men, women, and children, subjected to the rude gaze, the handling and examination of the spectators. At such times they are ordered to keep still and quiet, and if they do not they are threatened with punishment; but if they are quiet and lively, and try to make the best appearance, they are promised a reward. But their family love is too strong, and their endearment too great for them to suppress the anguish they feel on being separated, even if they have the stimulus of promised reward or punishment to assist them.

No; they cannot stifle the maternal yearnings of the human heart! In defiance of all constraint, all hope, and all fear, it gushes out in tones of prayerful supplication! "Give me my dear children! I want nothing more."

If any one would *feel* the *power* and *truthfulness* of the following lines of Mrs. Hemans, they must witness an auction of slaves :

“ There is none
In all this cold and hollow world, no fount
Of deep, strong devoted love, save that
Within a Mother's heart.”

There stood the mother, surrounded by her children, all sobbing in wild despair ! Close beside her stood her own mother, wringing her hands, with the tears streaming down from her aged and furrowed cheeks, her anguish almost too keen for utterance, between her sighs and tears sobbing out, “ O, why did massa die ? All is gone—gone. And must we live together no more ? No ; all is gone.”

I could endure this no longer. It was too heart-rending. And there were those who held slaves who could not look upon the sight. There are many who will not separate families ; but others are so hardened that it makes no difference whatever.

There are many who seem to care very little about being sold. They have no family ties ; they may be abused by their present owner, and therefore have little or nothing to lose ; while, on the other hand, they *may* better their condition by the change.

At these sales the most cruel and inhuman deception is often practiced. If there is a likely man or woman, whom they are going to carry a long distance from their family, they get some one that is acquainted with them to bid them off. They are then taken to some place till they are ready to start. They and their family are told that they are going to be carried only a few miles, and the first thing each party knows, they are separated for life, without the miserable consolation of saying, "Farewell." Now, this is done by the purchasers to save their own feelings. Their own nature cannot endure to behold the anguish and despair, nor listen to the cries and groans of hearts thus ruthlessly torn asunder!

Those who make the trade in negroes a profession, train them as they would horses. They teach them to talk lively and free, instruct them what to say, how to act, how they must stand, walk and look, hire them to jump about, act spry, and make the best appearance possible. They often make an agreement to give them a certain sum if they will "act the agreeable," so as to bring a particular price.

The following are the cases in which a

slave suffers death :—Insurrection, or an attempt to excite it ; rape, or an attempt on a white female ; murder of any person, or poisoning any one ; for the second offense of striking a white person ; or grievously wounding, bruising or maiming any one, the first offense, setting fire to any house in which any persons live, and for circulating any incendiary documents, that may cause an insurrection, conspiracy, or resistance among the slaves. All so offending are doomed to suffer death.

The slaves are not allowed to hold any property of consequence. They are not allowed to keep boats, books, stationery, or fire-arms of any sort, to rent houses, or, in short, to hold any property except fowls, pigs and the like. They are not to be employed in printing offices, nor as druggists and apothecaries. They are prohibited from holding meetings ; any weapons found upon them can be seized, and they are not allowed to read or write, or to assemble for the purpose of religious worship.

CHAPTER XVI.

AMUSEMENTS.

UNDER all these restrictions, privations, restraints and wrongs, it must be evident to all, that the slaves can have but little time or opportunity for amusement; but where they have a chance they make the best possible use of it. They most emphatically "Throw dull care away," and enter into their sports with every demonstration of joy.

They are generally allowed to make such use of Sunday as they please. Some hunt; others fish; some work for themselves; some go to see their friends; some sleep all day, and a few go to meeting. Their principal sports are Log-rolling, Corn Shucking, or what the Northern farmers call Husking, and at Christmas. The log-rollings and shuckings are always participated in by the whites. These sports are episodes in their lives. They are like oases to the weary traveler of the desert; they help to enliven the sad journey of life; they are faint rays that shine over their dark voyage, and enable them to keep

their course; they are stars which relieve them from eternal night.

Log-rollings are commonly in vogue during the winter season. After a farmer has cleared a piece of land, and gathered all but the large logs, he gives an invitation to his neighbors to come and help him roll the remaining logs into large piles, for the purpose of being burnt. They go by the principle that many hands make light work. They all accept the invitation with pleasure. The white men will go, and take two or three of their slaves; and by the time all have arrived there will be quite a collection.

They take a hand-spike, about four or five feet long, to lift, carry, and roll the logs with. Every one, whether black or white, strives to excel the others in feats of activity and strength, and especially jokes. To the one that can "tote" the largest log, lift the heaviest butt, or roll the log the highest on the pile, is awarded the palm. They always have a plenty of whisky, or peach brandy, to make them lively. They are full of sport and fun, and bandy round all kinds of jokes.

They generally so arrange matters, as to get done before night, when they take up their line of march for the house; and, on arriving

there, take a drink all round. Then commence their gymnastic exercises. They wrestle, jump, and run foot-races. Black and white all take part in the sport, and he who comes off victorious has an extra sip of the "white eye." After indulging in these exercises as long as they wish, some one calls for a fiddle—but if one is not to be found, some one "pats juber." This is done by placing one foot a little in advance of the other, raising the ball of the foot from the ground, and striking it in regular time, while, in connection, the hands are struck slightly together, and then upon the thighs. In this way they make the most curious noise, yet in such perfect order, it furnishes music to dance by. All indulge in the dance. The slaves, as they become excited, use the most extravagant gestures—the music increases in speed—and the Whites soon find it impossible to sustain their parts, and they retire. This is just what the slaves wish, and they send up a general shout, which is returned by the Whites, acknowledging the victory.

Then they all sing out,

"Now show the white man what we can do!"

And with heart and soul they dive into

the sport, until they fairly exceed themselves. It is really astonishing to witness the rapidity of their motions, their accurate time, and the precision of their music and dance. I have never seen it equaled in my life.

After the dance is over, they all take supper, and start for home, well pleased with their sport.

But the shucking frolic is considered by them as a far greater jubilee. A farmer will haul up from his field a pile of corn from ten to twenty rods long, from ten to twenty feet wide, and ten feet high. This pile consists of nothing but ears. They always break the ears from the stalk, and never cut it at the ground, as the Northern farmers do. It is so arranged that this can be on a moonlight evening. The farmer then gives a general "invite" to all the young ladies and gentlemen in the neighborhood, to come and bring their slaves; for it takes no small number to shuck such a pile of corn.

The guests begin to arrive about dark, and in a short time, they can be heard in all directions, singing the plantation songs, as they come to the scene of action. When they have all arrived, the Host makes the following propositions to his company, "You can shuck the

pile, or work till eleven o'clock, or divide the pile and the hands, and try a race."

The last offer is generally accepted. Each party selects two of the shrewdest and best singers among the slaves, to mount the pile and sing, while all join in the chorus. The singers also act the part of sentinels, to watch the opposite party—for it is part of the game for each party to try to throw corn on the other's pile.

As soon as all things are ready, the word is given, and they fall to work in good earnest. They sing awhile, then tell stories, and joke and laugh awhile. At last they get to making all the different noises the human voice is capable of, all at the same time—each one of each party doing his best to win the victory. One unacquainted with such scenes would think that Bedlam *had* broken loose, and all its inmates were doing their best to thunder forth their uproarious joy.

This is continued till the task is finished. They have plenty of liquor to keep up the excitement.

The victorious party peal forth their shouts and jests in a deafening volley, and the negroes seem fairly beside themselves. They jump, roll, and tumble about, as though "kingdom

come" was already in their possession. As soon as the pile is finished, the slaves keep a sharp eye on the Host, lest he should slip out of their sight, and get to the house ; for it is a rule with them at corn-shuckings, always to tote* their Host to the house, on their heads ; and the moment he gives the word to proceed to the house, he expects his doom—and, by dodging and running, he tries to escape it. But a dozen stalwart negroes pounce upon him, and it is always understood that he is not to hurt them, but prevent them, if he can, by wrestling and running ; but when the negroes get their iron gripe on him, it is useless to struggle. If he should get angry, it will make no difference ; the masters of the slaves will run to their rescue, and order them to seize him ; and nothing suits them better than this. They lay hold of him, and down he comes, and on to their heads he goes, in just no time at all ; and they bear him off in triumph to the house, where he receives the jokes and gibes of the young ladies, and of his family.

On arriving at the house they find that the young ladies have not been idle ; for the long tables smoke and groan with the loads of poultry, pigs, and all kinds of eatables, which

* See Webster.

would make a Lord Mayor and all his Aldermen smile with a peculiar emphasis. They sit down to the table with the appetites of alligators; for they have been sharpened by active exercise, and by the play of good humor and jokes, that have circulated freely all the while. After each one has hid no inconsiderable portion of what *was* before him, they rise from the table with the roundness of a drum, and the tightness of one of its heads.

As soon as the table is cleared the girls give a wink; and in a trice the room is stripped of every thing but the bed. Two or three men take hold of this, and set it out of the room. The negro fiddler then walks in; and the dance commences. After they have enjoyed their sport sufficiently, they give way to the negroes, who have already supplied themselves with torch-lights, and swept the yard. The fiddler walks out, and strikes up a tune; and at it they go in a regular tear-down dance; for here they are at home. The sound of a fiddle makes them crazy; and I do believe that if they were in the height of an insurrection, and any one should go among them, and play on a violin, they would all be dancing in five minutes. I never saw a slave in my life but would stop as if he were shot

at the sound of a fiddle ; and if he has a load of two hundred pounds on his head, he will begin to dance. One would think they had steam engines inside of them, to jerk them about with so much power ; for they go through with more motions in a minute, than you could shake two sticks at in a month ; and of all comic actions, ludicrous sights, and laughable jokes, and truly comic songs, there is no match for them. It is useless to talk about Fellows' Minstrels, or any other band of merely artificial "Ethiopians;" for they will bear no comparison with the plantation negroes. The latter, by frequenting these places of amusement in the capacity of entertainers, become actors, and that of a high order, for in this way they cultivate the faculties most necessary to success in that profession—ideality, marvelousness, and imitation—all of which greatly predominate in the negro character ; while tune or the sense of harmony bears off the palm ; for if there is a people whom, above all others, the gods themselves have made musical, they are entitled to the distinction. They hold the mirror up to nature ; nay, it is nature's self displayed so fully, and with such graphic power, that in spite of himself the gravest will burst out in

the most uproarious laughter. They keep up the dance till all are fairly tired out, and then disperse for their homes.

But Christmas is their time of times. They are generally allowed several days at Christmas, from two to seven, according to the disposition of their masters. They all have to do something special for this carnival. They get leave to plant a little patch of cotton, corn, rice, tobacco, pease, potatoes, or whatever they choose. Some make brooms, mats, tubs, pails, chairs, or horse-collars; and they have all these for sale about Christmas. Their plans are all matured beforehand. Some go to see their relations; some to parties; some to dances; some to one place, and some to another; and some go nowhere, have nothing, care for nothing, and get nothing. Some lay up their money; some drink it up; some gamble it away; and some buy themselves clothes.

They spend the time as they please, till the period expires for which their pass was given. They know that this is their greatest time, and they make the most of it; and having staid till the last moment, they return to take their stations of labor, and begin a new year's work.

Thus, year in and year out, they go through with the same monotonous course, till old age brings them to the grave. There are no ceremonies at the death and burial of a slave. He is nailed up in a rough box by his brother slaves, and is generally buried a few hours after death. Thus pass away those who have spent their lives in the service of others; and their graves are not often wet by the tears of those for whom they have always labored. Such is slavery, as it exists in our Southern States; and so it would be everywhere in the North, East or West; they would all pursue, substantially, the same plan, were they slaveholders. The Southerners treat their slaves as well, assume no more authority, nor are they any more exacting than others would be. So long as chattel slavery exists on earth, so long will the above abuses exist. It is nonsense to talk about correcting the abuses of slavery, for they will and must exist, as long as the institution remains. To undertake this is precisely like an attempt to make a drunken man act and talk as though he were sober. Truth, Justice and Reason will make them sober, and then they will abolish it, and its abuses will cease.

I cannot close better than by giving the

words of the greatest champion and defender of the morality of slaveholding the South ever knew,—the Reverend Richard Fuller, of South Carolina. He says, "I do not consider its perpetuation *proper*, if it be possible. Nor let any one ask, why not perpetuate it, if it be not a sin? The Bible informs us what man is; and among such beings, irresponsible power is a trust too easily and too frequently abused."

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